SPORTS / A17
Yankees clinch AL title, return to World Series

NEWS / A9
Col. Billy Bibit, 1980s coup leader, dies at age of 59

ACROSS / A15
Abductors of 7 forest guards face charges

WORLD / A22
Iran will need 18 months for A-bomb, say envoys

First legal case filed vs Estrada candidacy

By Kristine L. Alave

AS EXPECTED, JOSEPH ESTRADA'S DECLARATION that he is making another run for the presidency in the May elections yesterday drew the first legal case from a lawyer who the Supreme Court said earlier was suffering from "cerebral deficit."

Oliver Lozano, 68, who claims he is also

FIRST A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, October 27, 2009 • 5 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 331 P18

Noynoy gets taste of 'mob' treatment

By Philip C. Tubeza

KEEP YOUR HANKY in your pocket next time you meet Noynoy Aquino. And don't wipe it on his face or on his shoes.

Speaking at yester-

NOYNOY A10

Firms warn of oil shortage

Gov't asks suppliers to make sacrifice

By Amy R. Roma, Norman Bordadora and Christian V. Esguerra

OIL COMPANIES SAID they would follow a Malacañang order to bring down fuel prices to their levels 12 days ago, but warned of a possible supply shortage.

"We will comply. We have no choice, but [the executive order] has serious implications not only to the supply of products in the country, but also to investments," Edgar Chua, country chair of Shell companies in the Philippines, said at yesterday's meeting with officials of the Department of Energy (DOE).

Pet Martinez, president of Eastern Petroleum, said the industry's fuel supply would be threatened because of the order.

"Already, Ryjing V Philippines and Total Philippines said they are cancelling their importation [of petroleum products]. That's dangerous, when people stop selling," he said.

The oil companies said they would also suffer revenue losses as a result of Executive Order No. 839, which directs

INFO: B6

BACK ON TRACK Workers of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority parade in Marikina, capping their cleanup operations 10 days after floods brought by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" swept most of the city. Their next area: Pasig. (Story in Metro, Page 4 28)

MATT LORENZO

Teodoro, Villar keep mum on VP choice

IF DEFENSE SECRETARY Gilbert Teodoro Jr. and Sen. Manny Villar have set their eyes on their No. 2 in next year's presidential election, they're keeping it close to their chest.

Villar, standard-bearer of the Nacionalista Party (NP), refused to reveal the progress of his camp's courtship of Sen. Loren Legarda, who has declared she is running for vice president, but with whom is anybody's guess.

"Let's not mention names. Many things can happen since the election is still seven months away," Villar said.

But his choice of his chair's color betrayed him. He showed up at the Senate press office wearing a white shirt under his trademark orange jacket. Until yesterday, he had worn orange shirts in all his public appearances.

He was asked why he was wearing white—Legarda's campaign color. The self-made billionaire beamed and quipped, "I didn't have anything to wear.

TEODORO A10

DACER-CORBITO MURDERS

Lacson belies Mancao claim of kill orders

By Norman Bordadora

FORMALLY DENYING INVOLVEMENT in the 2000 murders of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he was in the United States with President Joseph Estrada at the time when he supposedly ordered Dacer's killing.

For the first time since the Department of Justice (DOJ) reopened its probe of the twin killings of Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, Lacson yesterday presented himself before a panel of DOJ prosecutors in a bid to rebut the testimony of his accuser, former Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao II.

Lacson went to the DOJ to affirm the authenticity of his affidavit rejecting Mancao's allegations.

In his counteraffidavit, Lacson also said he was with the then Trade Secretary, now Sen. Manuel Roxas II, as part of the Philippine delegation to a United Nations summit held in September 2000.

The panel did not pose any questions to Lacson during the hearing. Mancao was not present.

In his affidavit dated Feb. 12, 2009, Mancao said he was in a car with Lacson and with then Philippine National Police Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino when he overheard Lacson supposedly order Aquino to simultaneously kill Dacer and former PNP intelligence chief Reynaldo Berroya, a Lacson cohort.

The Dacer-Corbito murders occurred while Lacson was head of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF). Mancao and Aquino were among his officers then.

Aquino is currently held in a jail in the United States after being convicted of possession of confidential US documents.

LACSON A10

Piña bridal gown for Korina

By Larry Laviste and Philip C. Tubeza

AS THEY WALK DOWN the aisle this afternoon at three, the groom will be cool and looking forward to a honeymoon soon in the hearing-up campaign season, and the bride will cut a sexy silhouette in a mermaid-style Philippiniana gown with a five-meter cathedral train.

And dazzling from the aisle, the bride will wear no veil.

Sen. Mar Roxas, the lib-

PINA A11

JOB HUNT Applicants fill out employment forms during the beyond Job Market and beyond Libre Career Expo 2009, which opened on Monday at the Ebonita Activity Center in Makati City. The job fair will end today.

LEONARDO

'No need for swine flu emergency'

By Dona Pazybugan

DESPITE THE EXPECTED surge of swine flu cases in the northern hemisphere with the onset of winter, the Department of Health (DOH) sees no need to reinstate measures to prevent the spread of Influenza A(H1N1) and declare a health emergency at this time because the novel virus is already in the Philippines with generally mild symptoms.

The DOH has confirmed 5,212 cases as of Oct. 17, of which 30 people, mostly those with underlying medical conditions, have died, resulting in a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 0.6 percent. The DOH began tracking swine flu cases in May.

Globally, 414,945 people were infected with the flu virus of whom 4,999 died as of Oct. 18, for a CFR of 1.2 percent, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

"We are not going back to containment measures because we already have cases in the Philippines. As of the moment, there is no need to do that," Health Secretary Francisco Duque III told reporters at the DOH headquar-

NO NEED A6

Rizal fable caps 100th Read-Along

By Kaze V. Pedroso
Inquirer Research

TIME DOES FLY WHEN YOU'RE enjoying timeless tales.

The award-winning Inquirer Read-Along held its 100th session on Saturday, marking more than two years of promoting the love of reading among the young through colorful, interactive storytelling.

Show his idol and guest reader Richard Gomez opened the program which gathered around 40 schoolchildren at the multipurpose hall of the Inquirer's main office in Makati City.

"Gomez" was also joined by a group of storytellers composed of students and teachers from Sophia School in Meycauayan, Bulacan.

The actor-TV host read out "Ibon Linggit Lahat Ray Barakuda," which told of how a school of tiny fish banded

RIZAL A6

ACTOR and TV host Richard Gomez tells a story to children as guest reader of the Inquirer Read-Along on Saturday.

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

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US gives $8.5-M food aid to RP

By Christian Esguerra and Jerome Aning

THE UNITED STATES YESTERDAY announced it was giving $8.5 million (about P399 million) in food aid to the Philippines to help it recover from back-to-back storms that killed more than 900 people.

US Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer, calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo, said the aid, consisting of "1,000 metric tons of rice and 600,000 of dry milk, could feed nearly half a million people for two months, officials said.

The food aid "will help the people in most need of assistance, and, at a long standing friend and partner of the Philippines, the US stands ready to continue our cooperation and assistance in the future," Schafer said in a statement.

Tropical storm "Frank" last month triggered the worst flooding in Metro Manila in more than 40 years, and Typhoon Jeanie "Fengshen" early this month caused deadly landslides. The two storms killed 929 and flooded the homes of more than seven million people. The damage to agriculture alone has reached more than P21 billion, Philippine officials said.

The country is seeking $74 million in foreign assistance through the United Nations for food, water, sanitation facilities and health care. The UN offered said their aid was separate from that request.

Anthony Gelber, deputy presidential spokesperson, told Schafer brought with him a 20-item US trade cubicle to "further solidify direct commercial relations between US and Philippine producers, processors, traders and investors."

Gelber said the US official was having today for China but the business delegation would stay until the end of the week to look into more opportunities in places like Davao.

"They are going to see the potential of handling businesses here in the country and at the same time see the potential of joint ventures with Filipino businessmen," Gelber said.

Biofuels research, too

Schafer also told reporters on the sidelines of a trade and investment conference in Makati City that US businessmen were looking for partnerships in biofuel research to lessen dependence on petroleum products which are being blamed for global warming and climate change.

"We're looking at a relationship and partnership with the Philippines in terms of research on biofuels. We recognize and appreciate that you're faced with the same challenges we've faced with. You don't want to be reliant on one form of energy, energy that you do not necessarily control. I'm sure that we'll continue to share information, knowledge and discoveries," Schafer said.

The secretary said the US Department of Agriculture was spearheading policies to maximize productivity in corn-based biofuels.

Food stocks development

"There are a number of researches and projects focused on developing second- and third-generation food stocks for synthetic fuel. I'm convinced that in time we'll see a corn and [soybean or the] right term, two products [with] a fairly significant and there are institutions that [we have] not mastered our productivity," Schafer added.

He said US scientists were looking at grass, fast-growing trees, livestock manure, biomass and a variety of other options to use not just for food but for producing ethanol and other more environment-friendly fuel.

Schafer, a former governor of Iowa, said the USDA was also helping American companies find investment opportunities in the Philippines in the trade of vegetables and fruits that are considered "cash crops."

With a report from AP

US repeats offer to help with talks

THE US GOVERNMENT HAS REITERATED its willingness to help talks between the Philippine and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"We intend to be supportive in whatever way both parties think could be useful. We don't have a set roadmap yet [but] we're waiting to see where the discussions will go and how we can help," US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney told reporters yesterday in an interview at the Makati Shangri-La hotel.

Kenney was with visiting US Agriculture Secretary Thomas Vilsack who spoke at a business forum in the hotel.

Asked if US mediators were already engaged in discussions with Philippine and MILF peace negotiators, Kenney replied: "We're waiting to see what kind of assistance [they] require on how they think we can best support."

On Oct. 16, US Chargé d'Affaires Leslie Hunter met with MILF chief Murad Ebrahim in Davapanes, Sultan Kudarat.

In her message posted on the rebels' website, Hunter said the United States was committed to support the peace process by providing more assistance and more specific roles.

"Helping attain and sustain peace, security and development in Mindanao is a priority concern of our government," she had said.

Quoting Jim Montavell, head of the MILF peace panel secretariat, the MILF said on its website that without the participation of the former colonizing power, the process of finding a peaceful solution would be "really difficult."

The United States knows the root of the conflict in Mindanao, Montavell said, which is the annexation of Mindanao to the rest of the Philippines.

Jerome Aning

Malamang di nyo pansin ito...

Nguni't ang tulay na ito ang nagbigay pag-asa at sigla sa 38,000 mamamayan dito sa Alimodian, Ilo-ilo

Roger Juan/Ito Allpen
Inquirer, Visayas

Agrikultura ang pangunahing ikinabubuhay ng mamamayan ng Alimodian, at ang nag-isang bagsakan ng aming ani na palay, mais at gulay ay nasa Poblacion ng Ilo-ilo. Dati-rati, suko na ang mga magsasaka namin dahil sa haba at tagal ng biyahe tungo sa poblacion.

Isang araw, dumaan ang isang Secretary Jun Ebdane dito sa amin. Bahagi raw ng kanyang Countryside Development Program na matulungan ang mga liblib na lugar tulad ng sa amin. Siya na rin ang nakaisip ng tulay na ito bilang solusyon sa aming problema. At agad niyang ipinagawa!

Kung ang isang liblib na lugar tulad ng sa amin ay pinasok ni Secretary Jun Ebdane at personal na inasikaso, walang duda na magtatagumpay ang Countryside Development Program na sinimulan niya. Malaki ang pagkakaiba ni Jun Ebdane sa ibang mga politiko natin! May galing. Determinado. Subok at bihasa sa development na siyang daan tungo sa kaunlaran.

Di kaya si Jun Ebdane ang Tamang Daan sa 2010?

GMA returns, heads straight for Pampanga

PORAC, PAMPANGA—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo was back in her home province of Pampanga yesterday, barely 12 hours after returning from Thailand where she attended the 15th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit.

Ms Arroyo had just been in Hungary on two days before yesterday's visit, on the day before she left for Thailand.

She is scheduled to return to the province today head a Cabinet meeting that would discuss, among other things, subversion in Bicol.

She lingered here to monitor much and water systems and tracked the progress of anti-insurgency and poverty alleviation programs with local officials before heading for Angeles City later in the day.

Presidential Deputy Spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo said the President wanted to make sure that poverty alleviation programs in the province were being managed properly because Pampanga was "special to her."

She also said Ms Arroyo wanted to know what she described as "legacy programs" before her term ends in 2010.

Asked why the President did not issue inspections to local officials, Fajardo said, "Everything is the work of the President."

Ms Arroyo also awarded a scholarship certificate to Kevin Palo, the 500,000th "Pangalang Gloria" scholar.

In Angeles City, she met with officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways and discussed ways to address the perennial flooding in the province.

She asked the DPWH and local officials to review a proposal to dredge the Pampanga River that is being opposed by nongovernment organizations in the province and to find out if the project could actually remove flooding. Christine Cayabyab, Inquirer Central Luzon

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Solon wants large firms to advance tax payments to cover storm rehab

By Leila B. Salaverria

IT'S NOT ENOUGH THAT THEY HAVE huge donations for storm victims, large companies should also advance some of their tax payments for the next two years to allow the government to collect P100 billion for flood rehabilitation without having to resort to loans, a member of Congress has proposed.

According to Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez, Provincial Municipal Activity, in a phone conversation, forward the idea which he put forth in a resolution he filed yesterday.

"I propose a front loading of the big taxpayers of their gross receipts for 2003 and 2004, meaning, the BIR will collect from them, upon agreement, a percentage of their gross receipts," Suarez said in a press conference.

In the resolution, the Bureau of Internal Revenue would be authorized to collect 10 percent of a large taxpayer's gross receipts or sales.

Suarez said he supported in principle at least P100 billion that was to rehabilitate public roads, buildings and other infrastructure damaged by Tropical Storms "Onday" and "Pepeng."

The country's largest taxpayers are the petroleum, telecommunications, alcohol, tobacco and pharmaceutical companies, among others.

The President, however, does not want her administration tainted with suspicion of corruption in the funds' use, Suarez, a close ally of Ms. Arroyo's, said.

It was for this reason, he said, that he included in the resolution a provision stating that the funds could only be used by the next administration.

"This money is to be used by the next administration in order to continue the rehabilitation of areas affected by the typhoons and to address the budget deficit," the solon believes more.

The resolution would help assist the country's ballooning budget deficit, Suarez explained, since the government would not need to obtain loans for the rehabilitation work for which it would have to pay interest.

Suarez said the large companies should agree to his proposal as a way of returning the favor to the people who made them profitable.

"Why are they prosperous? The Filipinos made them rich. It's payback time. They cannot just keep sending packages of relief goods. Let's help in rehabilitation. It's rigorous of goodwill," he said.

He said that if his resolution were implemented, the country would receive positive ratings from international financial institutions that would see how the private sector helped in flood rehabilitation efforts.

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Process for releasing relief goods explained

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By Nikko Dizon

THE DISTRIBUTION of relief goods to typhoon victims is done upon the request of local government units, a system that stems from the devolution of the social services functions under the late Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said yesterday.

Cabral said her department explained the process during an impromptu dialogue with military officials over lunch at the main office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Quezon City.

Members of Mandaluyong Mayor Tito Sotto's (MBD), Antipolo and Kalibo (Aklan) mayors, and Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo were also present.

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Fake Levi's for victims? Why not

GOVERNMENT RELIEF GOODS for typhoon victims usually go straight to warehouses for storage or are simply destroyed. But if the International Property Office of the Philippines had its way, the fake goods would be put to better use.

IP Philippines director general Adrian Cristobal Jr. said the government agency was trying to find ways to re-distribute the confiscated goods without them being resold in the market.

He cited a donation earlier this month of thousands of pieces of seized counterfeit clothes to victims of Tropical Storms "Onday" and "Pepeng."

IP Philippines issued a clearance to the Bureau of Customs to donate 10,000 counterfeit Lacoste shirts and 16,000 fake Levi's jeans to typhoon victims.

Cristobal said the trademark owners of both brands had agreed to the scheme, provided all tags with the false trademarks on the clothes were removed.

He argued the trademark owners the goods would not find their way back to the market.

Abigail L. Ho

New storm spotted

THE LOW PRESSURE area the world's hottest tropical storm tossed in the Pacific Ocean over the weekend has developed into a tropical depression — that could enter the Philippine area of responsibility at the end of the week.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the tropical depression over the Marianas Islands was estimated at 2,900 kilometers east of the Visayas.

"The weather system is expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility on Oct. 29 or 30," Pagasa said.

Nikko Dizon

PUBLIC SERVICE Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan (right) was cited by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry for his "commitment to excellence and good governance, reforms and promotion of inward trade, investments and tourism," during the 35th Philippine Business Conference and Expo held recently at Manila Hotel which had President Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd right) as guest of honor. From left are Trade Secretary Peter Favila, PCCI president Edgardo Lacson and Roberto Ancheta, organizing chair.

Cops get new cars

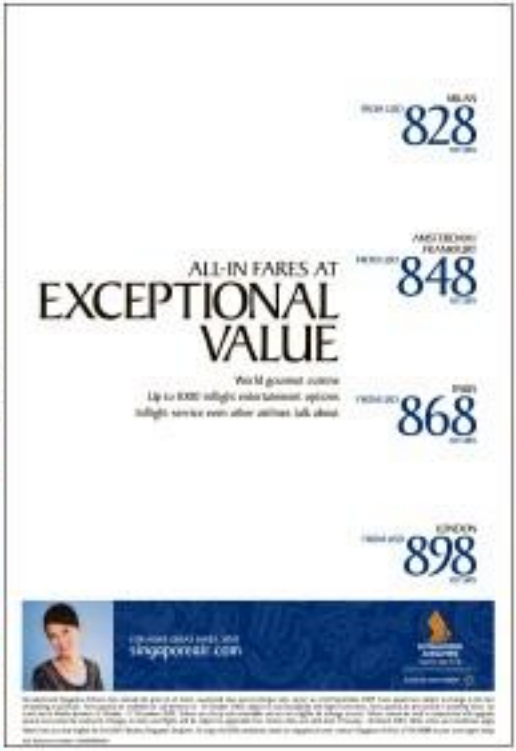
THE PHILIPPINE National Police (PNP) has deployed 473 new patrol cars to its stations nationwide, even in far-flung villages.

PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa yesterday said the vehicles would boost the government presence in remote areas where there are insurgents.

"From Batanes to Tawi-Tawi, there is at least one police vehicle serving the mobility requirements of every police station," Verzosa said in a statement.

He said there were now 9,600 patrol and military vehicles assigned to 1,600 municipal and city police stations nationwide.

Marlon Ramos



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Firms warn of oil shortage amid price freeze

By Inquirer Staff

dents to bring down prices to their Oct. 23 levels. President Macapagal-Arroyo issued the order on Friday.

On Oct. 23, prices of gasoline were raised by P1.20 a liter and those of diesel by P2 a liter.

State of calamity

The order freezing oil prices will last while the state of calamity the President has declared—by Proclamation No. 1946—is in effect. Ms Arroyo issued the order in the wake of the events storms that devastated large swaths of Luzon, including Metro Manila.

Anthony Cotoco, the President's deputy spokesperson, said EO 839 would be "strictly implemented" both by the DOE and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he would phone oil firms Petron Corp., which is partly owned by the government, to "set a good example" to other oil companies.

"They should be the first to follow the President's executive order," he said in a radio interview.

Unreasonable pricing

In the order, Ms Arroyo said the government had to "respond immediately to the distress of the Filipino people to prevent unreasonable increase in the prices of petroleum products during the state of calamity."

"The government must exercise the powers conferred upon it under the limits set by the laws to prevent predatory pricing, unconscionable pricing, cornering, among others, which the oil industry players may resort to," she said.

Asked during the inquiry of Typhoon "Nganing," the President declared on Oct. 2 the entire country in a state of calamity.

A few days before, the Independents' Trade and Industry placed a ceiling on all prices of basic commodities in supermarkets and wet markets to prevent unscrupulous business owners from taking advantage of the shortage of basic commodities in the wake of Ineng "Ondoy."

Ms Arroyo directed the Joint DOE-DOJ task force to monitor the implementation of EO 839 and to file complaints against violators.

Give a little

Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera said rehabilitation efforts in Luzon would not make headway because of the rising fuel prices.

"We have to respond to the devastation ... We don't have to be an oil company to realize [that] you have to give a little," Devanadera said.

The joint DOE-DOJ task force had met with oil company executives for reasonable fuel prices and continuous supply over the past two weeks. The oil firms, however, continued to raise prices until the past two days.

Devanadera said the companies had used as basis stating international prices for the last increases. "Don't tell me that when the [world] prices go up, [the prices of] their present stock also go up," she said.

Overpriced law

She said the price freeze complied with the Oil Deregulation Law. "It's in Section 34-E," Devanadera said.

The provision reads: "In times of national emergency when the public interest so requires, the DOE may, during the emergency and under reasonable terms prescribed by it, temporarily take over or direct the operation of any person or entity engaged in the industry."

Unioil Petroleum Philippines was the first to comply with the order. On Sunday, it cut prices of diesel by P2 a liter; unleaded gasoline by P1.25 a liter; regular gasoline by 85 centavos a liter; and kerosene by P1.10 a liter.

Chevron and Seaoil Philippines implemented the same cuts effective 12:01 a.m. today.

"While Chevron will comply with EO 839, this does not preclude other legal options and remedies he or she deems," said Chevron spokesperson Toby Nebrida.

Cheap but not available

Other oil companies had yet to announce their respective oil price cuts as of press time.

"Would you consider higher public interest for products to be cheap but not available or for products to be expensive but existing the true cost, but available?" Chua asked.

Pilipinas Shell declared that it will sell whatever stocks it has and will only impose petroleum products again until the EO is lifted. The company normally has an inventory of 15 to 21 days.

Take a loss

Despite the assertions of the oil firms, Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes maintained that the directive would be enforced and that all oil companies must comply.

"Compliance with the law and any presidential issuance is mandatory—we will implement this law. And we would like to request the oil companies to take a bit, take a loss at this time when the country faces devastation," Reyes told oil firm executives at the meeting.

He said the oil firms could take legal action, "but the law must be enforced, the law must be obeyed."

Legal options

The oil companies said that before the government could impose any fuel price cap, a congressional nod or executive resolution was needed.

"We are studying legal options," Martinez said. "The [EO] is very dangerous ... It is not the way our legal experts see as an implementation of the emergency aspect within the Oil Deregulation Law."

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. supported Ms Arroyo's decision to freeze oil prices. "It is expected that the President should assert that," said Villar, who will run for president in the 2010 elections.

He said it was well within the powers and prerogatives of the Chief Executive to resort to such a measure during an emergency.

Both ways

Cielito said the EO could work "both ways," meaning oil companies would benefit if prices dropped below the Oct. 23 levels. In that case, he said oil firms would still sell their products at a higher rate and enjoy bigger profits.

"The EO has been thought of," he said. "This can work both ways, but will work for the general welfare of our people."

Cielito said debates all companies would "have to have the consequences." With a report from Michael Lim Ubac

AN ATTENDANT refills the tank of a taxicab at a gas station on Ortigas Avenue in San Juan City. Malacañang has ordered a freeze in gas prices in their Oct. 23 levels. | Inquirer file photo

Rizal fable caps 100th Inquirer Read-Along session

By Inquirer Staff

together to announce a "huge problem."

The underwater adventure was retold by Filipino readers by Tata Aguila and Anne U. Villanueva and published by the Philippine Children's Television Foundation and Carlos Publishing House Inc.

Sophia students Jackielyn Reis, Dominique Justin, Jasper Regino, Joseph Irine and Alyssa Bolisay and teacher Ebing Bernabe starred in a skit to narrate "The Boy with an Orange Balloon," a story about Channing Channing, a Thai activist and politician.

Rizal's fable

Channing is the 1992 Ramon Magsaysay awardee for government service. His story appears in the children's book series "Great Men and Women of Asia" published by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation.

To cap the session, Sophia School principal Ann Abacan led a musical rendition of "O Pagong at si Matsing" ("The Turtle and the Monkey"), a fable originally penned by the country's national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal.

The performance was based on a version by National Artist Virgilio Almario and published by Adarna House. Teachers Sherry Revilla and Bernadette Bolisay led the musical chameleons.

As part of its educational tour, the Sophia School troupe will also perform the stories before students of Summerhill Montessori School in Pratchaya Khiri Khan, Thailand, in the first week of November.

He added that and to keep the children in rapt attention, Gamen played multiple characters and mimicked different voices.

"I enjoyed reading for the kids," he later said in an interview. "I have had a bit of experience in that department because I used to read to my daughter Juliana and have often been invited as a storyteller to some schools."

"The children today were very receptive," Gamen noted. "They were really focused and they seemed to enjoy the story."

"I find programs like the Inquirer Read-Along very helpful. Reading is the food for the brain. It is a very interesting way of teaching and it would be nice if more children would have access to reading [materials]."

Reading tips

Saturday's audience was composed of pupils from four different schools, namely Wharton Learning Center in Cavite; and Think & Try School, Colegio de San Agustin, and Montessorian Academy in Makati.

Part-time participant Rowena Lemuel went to the 100th session together with her children—Diego Tristan, 4, and Isabella, 6.

"The readers were very entertaining and the stories were really suitable for the kids," Lemuel said. "In fact, I have picked up some tips on how to read stories to my kids."

The Lacuata children and their both enjoyed Rizal's fable the most. "Maraming sana sa buo," Isabella said as little brother Diego shyly nodded in agreement.

The Oct. 24 session was held in cooperation with Trillionaire Corp. and 6001 Network.

29 months of joy

The children received gifts and prizes courtesy of Abiel Publishing and "Family Feud," a game show hosted by Cesinto Lim Gatbi.

Since May 2007, in a span of 29 months, the Inquirer Read-Along had brought the joys of reading and storytelling to children in Metro Manila, Baguio City, Bulacan, Laguna, the Bicol region, Davao, Negros Occidental, Davao, Cotabato and Maguindanao.

On Thursday, the extension program Read-Along 2—Across the Nation received a Movie Award from the Philippine Quill, a prestigious award giving body for business communications. The body also recognized the Inquirer Read-Along with an Excellence Award last year.

The next session is scheduled for Nov. 14. Interested participants may call Ellen Caparoso at 897-8808 loc 329. Slots are available on a first-come, first-served basis. With a report from Iciliani Quindala, Inquirer Research

No need for swine flu emergency, says DOH

By Inquirer Staff

ters in Manila yesterday.

Quarantine procedures

Duque said the existing quarantine procedures at entry ports, including the thermal scan that checks arriving passengers for fever, were enough at this juncture.

"It's probably not necessary [to take steps] beyond what our quarantine personnel are doing. Of course, we still have the thermal scans. They're going to say 'We're not going to reduce our efforts in terms of those important quarantine measures,' so I think [the secretary said]."

"But again, it doesn't make sense to be in a state of hyperalertness because the virus is already in the communities and we have documented that 90 percent [of patients] recover and there's a less than 1 percent CFR. And so the important thing is that our systems are in place," he added.

Pandemic alert

When the WHO raised a pandemic alert over the swine flu virus in May, the DOH instituted huge-scale testing, contact tracing and administration of the antiflu medicine Oseltamivir not only for confirmed cases but also for people who have some sort contact with them.

After a few months, however, the DOH lifted the strict measures and, in line with the WHO recommendation, said the monitoring of the virus would be part of the regular influenza surveillance system.

"We follow the recommendation of the WHO," Duque said.

Over the weekend, US President Barack Obama declared the swine flu outbreak in the United States a national emergency, giving him the power to order influenza-stricken areas to speed up treatment and protect uninfected patients.

Forty-six of the 50 US states now report widespread flu activity—an unusually early surge that usually takes place in January or February at the peak of a normal flu season, according to US health authorities.

Preemptive measure

Duque interpreted Obama's declaration as a preemptive measure. "It doesn't reflect an imminent surge in H1N1 cases. It was meant to supplement the US health system to respond to the possibility of a sudden surge in cases," he said.

He said that in some parts of the United States, in the northeast and eastern parts, the virus was observed to be waning.

"But our real question the students of the US leadership in declaring a national emergency," he said.

Duque acknowledged that infected people from countries experiencing winter would travel to warmer countries like the Philippines.

"Yes, it's possible they're going to bring it in here, but we don't have to be voice careful. Our quarantine procedure will continue. Those with fever will be put aside," he said.

Second wave

The DOH, nevertheless, is on the lookout for a possible "second wave" of the spread of the virus.

A second wave, according to Duque, could either mean that the same virus strain has indeed, at a bigger part of the population, or that the virus has mutated into a deadlier form.

The DOH until yesterday should accelerate some flu vaccination and actively monitor influenza-like illnesses that can worsen or lead.

Random testing of suspected swine flu cases will continue to track any mutation of the virus. "If we see more people in emergency rooms, more serious symptoms, those are the things we are in lookout for," Duque said.

Hospitals have been advised to prepare to handle a possible increase in swine flu patients.

"Richard off the Italian spread of the flu, the public is advised to practice good respiratory hygiene like covering one's nose and mouth when sneezing, and properly washing hands.

"What is important is that hospitals are ready, not for all persons with influenza-like illness but the high-risk cases.

Foot baths at Naia

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) yesterday assured the public that "heightened surveillance measures of the total screening and foot baths was still being observed at all ten-any Aquino International Airport (Naia) terminals amid the declaration of a national emergency in the United States.

The MIAA Medical Division, headed by Dr. Augusto Sillo, and the Bureau of Human Quarantine are still manning round-the-clock thermal scanner stations at the arrival areas, MIAA General Manager Alfonso Cusi said in a statement.

Duque said H1N1 victims would not be available in the country until January or the latter.

"It's not as quick as we want it to be, or as the technical drug companies had promised it to be. It's much slower than expected for various reasons," he said.

The DOH has placed an order with the WHO for P300 million worth of vaccines which the department said should be given to high-risk groups namely frontline health workers, the elderly and the very young, the pregnant and those with preexisting illnesses. With a report from Arvelou Aning

WATCHFUL Quarantine officer Perlita Cruz monitors a scanner that measures the body temperature of arriving passengers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1. Philippine health officials are keeping watch on the arrival of tourists, which could bring in a second wave of the swine flu virus. EDDA SANTOS

Comelec: Can't stop celebrity bet endorsers

By Cathy Yamsuan

OTHERS MAY CRY FOUL BUT THE Commission on Elections (Comelec) insists stop celebrities like Iris Aquino and Willie Revillame from endorsing their personal choices even before the official campaign period for the 2010 elections begins.

"The case of endorsement by a celebrity is not yet an issue facing the Comelec but it is very ripe for discussion," said the poll body's spokesperson James Jimenez in a briefing here.

The Comelec law on electoral provision barring a famous person from endorsing a presidential candidate, whether for pay or not.

Against is the outspoken youngest sister of Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, the presidential candidate of the Liberal Party, while Revillame has made public appearances with Nacionalista Party standard bearer Sen. Manny Villar.

"Iris is an interesting element. She has very strong public appeal. I cannot say we can gag her," Jimenez said.

"But in my opinion, and I don't intend to bind the Comelec en banc, it is very difficult to prevent a private person from supporting a candidate. Just because she is famous and public property does not mean she cannot express her choices," he said.

Jimenez said he expected the Comelec would soon be faced with the issue.

In case this happens, he predicted, "the Comelec will respect the personal freedom of these celebrities. There is a need to balance the law with the recognition of freedom of expression. As far as private citizens go, they can support and promote [who] their want, you cannot muzzle it under."

Jimenez noted that US President Barack Obama, during his candidacy, enjoyed the support of Oprah Winfrey, a talk show host with a wide following in the United States.

"We cannot expect everyone to be controversially bored at the same level. Some candidates will have celebrity endorsers. I don't think the system can be faulted. And it will be unfairly restrictive if they are barred from expressing their personal preferences. Will that open the floodgates? But this is a democracy," he said.

In the same forum, Jimenez warned candidates he both national and local posts that they are expected to refrain from premature campaigning prior to the official start of the campaign period.

The official campaign period for national candidates begins on Feb. 9. Local candidates can start stating back and pasting up statements on March 26.

Disqualification is the penalty for premature campaigning.

Jimenez defined premature campaigning as "any act that promotes (one's) candidacy or diminishes the possibility of winning (of) any opponent."

"If you promote yourself, that is campaigning. A candidate who goes around saying he is merely thanking the people [pronounced] is campaigning. The context is immaterial," he said.

Registration deadline final —poll body

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS HAS ruled out the possibility of extending the registration period for new voters beyond midnight of Dec. 31.

Comelec spokesperson James Jimenez at a breakfast forum said yesterday the poll body need finalize the list of voters for the May 10, 2010, elections by November. An extension of the registration period would mean delays that could jeopardize an already tight schedule.

"We need to close the list by the end of November for the allocation of precincts. [Unless the registration is finished] we cannot determine the number of ballots and other supplies [to be shipped to all provinces] so we need to done on a certain day," Jimenez said.

He shot down proposals to extend the registration through the coming long weekend.

"Most people will be in the cemeteries anyway," he said, referring to the observance of All Saints' Day on Nov. 1, a Sunday, and All Souls' Day the following day which was proclaimed a non-working holiday.

Jimenez, a lawyer, warned against claiming disenfranchisement if would-be registrants decide they do not want to wait in the long queues. "Refusal to wait in line is a personal choice. It cannot be called disenfranchisement," he said.

As it is, the Comelec has extended registration hours by four hours every day.

"We extended registration from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. to 8 a.m.–9 p.m., seven days a week. We also added biometric capturing machines but [there are just so many] people crowding the registration offices," Jimenez said.

So far, the Comelec has listed "between 2.9 million and 3 million new registrants," he said. Cathy Yamsuan

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, October 27, 2009
30th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Rom 8:18-25
Gospel: Lk 13:18-21

Jesus continued speaking, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a person who has taken a mustard seed and planted it in the garden. The mustard seed grew and became like a small tree, so that the birds of the air shelter in its branches."

And Jesus said again, "What is the kingdom of God like? It is like a woman who has taken yeast and hidden it in three measures of flour until it is all leavened."

Commentary

Central to the people's Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God. Jesus' primary mission in his public ministry was to offer them the possibility of salvation, which, for the most part, he expressed by the term, kingdom of God. Jesus also saw the apparent once of the kingdom of God as manifested in his miracles and healings.

Here compares the kingdom of God to a mustard seed, or to what happens to a mustard seed. The mustard plant begins as inconspicuous, the smallest of all seeds, but becomes conspicuous, a large tree. The emphasis of the parable is on the contrast between beginning and end. Jesus' point is that the kingdom of God is an historical process, beginning inconspicuously, but leading to conspicuous results. The birds coming to the branches of the mature mustard plant serve to illustrate how large the plant has become, so as to accentuate the contrast between the beginning and the end.

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End corruption, DPWH chief dares subordinates

By Kristine L. Alave

ON HIS FIRST DAY IN OFFICE, HENRY AP-pointed Public Works Secretary Victor Domingo admitted the department was riddled with corruption and he challenged all its employees to get rid of it.

In his speech during the handover ceremony yesterday, Domingo, who replaced Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary (DPWH) Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., said he was aware that many people had negative perceptions about the department.

Ebdane stepped down to focus on his bid for the presidency in the 2010 national elections.

Domingo, who served as a presidential adviser prior to his appointment to the DPWH, cited an Inquirer editorial last week that urged him to clean up the department.

Last year, a World Bank study scored the collusion among contractors for a foreign-funded road project and said the DPWH home shows it.

"My challenge to all DPWH officers and employees is that there is circle to be eliminated. Tear to end your net, as long as I can remember, the DPWH has been in the company of the BIR (Bureau of Internal Revenue), customs and Bagbid (Department of Education), which are perceived to be corrupt agencies," he said.

Although there are bad apples in the agency, the "majority of DPWH's rank and file are still honest, hard-working and knowledgeable," he said. He commended DPWH field men who worked 24 hours a day at the height of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" and "Pepeng."

"So I hope the DPWH can graduate from the corrupt category that it has been perceived to be in. I know that with the recent salary increases, and if only we could listen to our conscience, we will be able to graduate from that category with ... flying colors," Domingo said.

He said he would fast-track the repair and rehabilitation of all public infrastructure damaged by the recent storms that ravaged Luzon.

Pols see little chance of Ebdane winning

By Robert Garcaya
Inquirer Central Luzon

LUCENA/PO. CITY—RESIGNED PUBLIC Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. can count on some of his province mates and mayors in Zambales to deliver the vote in the 2010 presidential elections.

But the province's top leaders said the chances of Ebdane, a native of Candelaria town, winning the highest elective post in the country were very slim.

"Ebdane has a [small chance of winning the presidency in 2010. As a veteran politician, I'll say it's only because of lack of preparation. Even if he runs for governor, he would need at least two years to prepare," said Gov. Amor Deloso.

But Deloso was quick to say he was proud of what Ebdane had done for the province.

"He is a kind, responsible and capable man," he said.

Deloso, however, said that he could not support Ebdane as he had committed his support to the Liberal Party candidate, Sen. Benigno Aquino III.

"I will support Noynoy, but I will not campaign against Ebdane here," he said.

Deloso said that while many Zambaleños developed loyalty to Ebdane, "he has no political base here."

"He was through the ranks [in the Philippine National Police where he served as its chief before his appointment to the Cabinet], so he has never been raised in elective politics," the governor said.

Ramil Hipol, Zambales'one for Ebdane (ZAE) spokesperson, said Zambales has "valiant family and tend to be clannish."

"Their political system, therefore, tends to mirror this. While public officials in Zambales rise the party line, it won't be impossible to expect that their core political networks would be silently steering the machinery of Ebdane," Hipol said.

He said that he was not surprised that people from Masinloc and the Visayas had come out in support of Ebdane.

"This means that Ebdane, through his years of service under various capacities, has endeared himself to a lot of people wherever," he said.

Hipol said ZAE, a volunteer organization formed by heads of local people's organizations and community leaders, is committed to "carry another Zambaleño to Malacañang," referring to the election of President Ramon Magsaysay in 1953.

Dr. Felicisimo Beaniy, president of Ramon Magsaysay Technological University in the town, said he believed Zambales would deliver the votes for Ebdane.

On the other hand, Zambales Rep. Milagros Magsaysay, a member of Lakas Kampi-CMD, said she was committed to support Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr. as the administration's standard-bearer.

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Col. Billy Bibit, 1980s coup leader, dies at the age of 59

BIBIT

RETIRED COL. BILLY Bibit, a prominent member of the Reformed Armed Forces Movement (RAM) that helped restore democracy in the country in 1986, died Tuesday of a lingering illness. He was 59.

Bibit's wife Dolores said the former rebel commissary officer died at 9:58 p.m. in their farmhouse in Pansol, Bifid.

Bibit, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class 1972, is survived by his wife, four children and seven grandchildren.

Dolores said her husband's remains will be cremated on Friday at Heritage Memorial Park in Taguig City.

Bibit's daughter Haya told the Inquirer the family decided to take her father home early Monday from the Veterans Memorial Hospital in Quezon City where he had been confined since he suffered a stroke on Nov. 10, 2008, that left him paralyzed.

Bibit, a veteran intelligence officer in war-torn Mindanao, was one of the more colorful and controversial rebel officers during the country's stormy transition to democracy. He jumped the gun in Catubaio to reinforce his colleagues on Edsa in the February 1986 People Power revolution but was arrested at the airport. He went on to participate in a series of bloody military coup attempts against the administration of Corazon Aquino in the late 1980s.

Along with some other RAM leaders, Bibit served time in prison for leading the coup attempts, but he was subsequently pardoned by the government.

He joined the political fray and made a failed bid to win a seat in Congress in 1995.

He served in the Bureau of Customs as chief collector in the Subic Bay Freeport. Transferred to the Port of Cebu in 2002, he was cited for some glaring anomalies which he engaged graft charges for alleged illegal confiscation of 600 tons of Canadian wheat. He was relieved in 2005 for supposedly lacking civil service eligibility. Maybelle Ramos, with Jhon-ron Napallinan, Inquirer Visayas

Bentains mark Edgar's 46th birthday still in the dark

By Jeannette I. Andrade

MOMBERS OF THE BENTAIN family and the volunteers against Crime and Corruption (VACC) held a Mass yesterday morning to celebrate the 46th birthday of Edgar Bentain, who was abducted outside a Manila casino more than a decade ago and was never seen again.

Bentain was a video operator at the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) who was suspected of leaking a video showing former President Joseph Estrada playing high-stakes baccarat with Claudio "Xiong" Ang at the MV Grata at the casino.

Inquirer left on the subpoena of the video for his disappearance but the case has yet to be solved.

"It hurts my family to see that he (Estrada) is coming back. If there is really justice in this country, he will not be allowed to return. I would rather be hungry running (in the 2013 presidential election)," Bentain's brother Edard said.

The gambling tape was used against Estrada in the 1998 presidential campaign by a rival candidate. The law forbids government officials from gambling in casinos.

"The scars are still fresh. We are still in the healing period. We have not gotten justice for Edgar. We still do not know what happened to Edgar," Edard said.

Edard told the Inquirer he hoped the 10-year-old mystery would not be considered as obscurity like the disappeared structure of the Grand Boulevard found on Roxas Boulevard which was shut down in July 2000.

"The hotel has already closed down, and yet we still do not have any idea what happened to our brother," said Edard. The hotel (then named Manila Hotel) was where Edgar was searched by a group of armed men on Jan. 15, 1999.

Edard appealed to Sen. Panfilo Lacson to follow through on his request and dredge everything for traces of his brother's disappearance.

In a recent privilege speech, Lacson, who served as the second police chief during Estrada's short-lived administration, hinted that the former president may have had something to do with the murder but did not provide solid details. Inquirer Research

Edgar's father, the late Islander Bentain, was the longtime police chief on the University of the Philippines campus.

Edard also lamented that the people responsible for luring the video showing the underground Edgar had also disappeared.

safety tips after a flood

After a flood hits your home, be very cautious before you power up, plug and turn on your appliances.

Check if your house is the only one without power or if it's the whole neighborhood. If your home is the only one without power, you need to check your home electrical system. Ask a competent licensed electrician to do this for you.

Please remember these helpful safety reminders:

- Make sure that the main electrical power switch or circuit breaker is turned off.
- Unplug all equipment and appliances. Turn off switches of permanently connected equipment. Unscrew all light bulbs if possible.
- Remove mud and dirt from the service equipment or main circuit breaker/fuse and its enclosure, using protective gear or equipment such as rubber gloves, rubber soled shoes and well-insulated pliers.
- As a safety precaution always assume the wires are "live," "force" or energized whenever working.
- Allow conventional outlets, switches, electrical wires, sockets, connections, breakers and other devices to dry completely. Drying may take days, depending on how wet the system is and on external temperature.
- When all electrical wires and accessories are dry and clean, proper testing must be done to ensure the integrity of the electrical system.
- Appliances must be completely dry and serviced or checked by a licensed electrician or service center upon. Do not turn on damaged electrical appliances.
- Be observant and watchful after powering up your house to immediately detect any abnormalities.

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Teodoro, Villar keep mum on choice of VP

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except this."

Legarda has not discounted the possibility of teaming up with Villar, although she is a member of the Nationalist People's Coalition. The NPC lost to defunct senator Jose Yusuf Estrada in its presidential candidate.

"I am quietly, deeply reflecting on who could best help me accomplish my goals for the people," Legarda said as the convention.

"I will only consider it if he accepts my platform as sustainable development, good governance and climate change adaptation, and priority on poorest members, which is so close to my heart," she added.

Villar stressed that his teaming mate was not required to join the NP. "We are not limiting as party members the choice of my running mate," he said.

A man or a woman?

Teodoro, the presidential candidate of the administration Lakas-Kampi-CMD, also was mum on who would be his running mate when pressed by municipal mayors at a forum yesterday.

Cagayan Tarlac Mayor Reynaldo Catanduan said Teodoro refused to talk about his vice president, not even hinting whether it was a female or male.

"We're anxious to know his running mate because our constituents are asking the same," said Catanduan, a godson of Teodoro.

Teodoro said Governors Eddie Jimmy Bitoy of Batangas and Gwendolyne Garcia of Cebu were both competent to be his running mate, but he distanced himself from negotiations being conducted by the administration party.

"I'm not pushing for anyone right now and I am leaving it to the party to choose," Teodoro said in a talk with reporters on the sidelines of the launching of the Department of National Defense Proper Citizen's Charter yesterday.

He described Garcia as a topperforming governor and reminded her residing from Visayas. The vote-rich region was known to have delivered a million votes to President Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 elections.

Gabriel Claudio, Lakas-Kampi-CMD secretary general, also raised the possibility of Teodoro running up with Tourism Secretary Ace Durano, a Cebuano, and an NPC member like Legarda.

Geographical combination

In choosing Teodoro's running mate, the administration party was also considering what Claudio called "geographical combination."

"It's also good if he would have a running mate who is from the south," said Claudio, who is also President Macapagal-Arroyo's political adviser.

Teodoro's political backbench is Tarlac province where he served as a district representative.

Claudio said Lakas-Kampi-CMD could easily consider a running with NPC members such as Legarda and Durano on its own standard bearer.

He said the ruling party had tentatively set the party convention in Cebu for June 12 or eight days before the start of the filing of certificates of candidacy.

By choosing Cebu as venue, the ruling party all but indicated that Teodoro's vice presidential candidate might come from there.

PRESIDENTIAL hopeful and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr. addresses mayors of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines during its general assembly held at Manila Hotel. The meeting carried the theme of "Sustaining Exemplary Practices for Effective Local Governance." MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Not aspiring for higher post

Rep. Pablo Garcia of the second congressional district in Cebu said his daughter Gwendolyne was being eyed by Teodoro as his vice president, but he said that the governor was not aspiring for a higher post.

The Garcia family left that the governor should stay in Cebu, where officials she was able to unite, he said.

"We can all respect that before the convention, things have been ironed out," he said.

Not aspiring for higher post

Rep. Pablo Garcia of the second congressional district in Cebu said his daughter Gwendolyne was being eyed by Teodoro as his vice president, but he said that the governor was not aspiring for a higher post.

The Garcia family felt that the governor should stay in Cebu, where officials she was able to unite, he said.

"Leaving Cebu would affect the unity [of Cebu officials]," the elder Garcia said.

He noted that his daughter had announced that she would not run for vice president.

In Barangay City, provincial administrator chief Jong Ingeniero said that Governor Garcia would not run for vice president.

"She will be seeking reelection in Barangay for governor in the 2010 elections," Ingeniero said, adding that there had been no discussions between Teodoro and Garcia about the vice presidential race.

"She loves Batangas and she does not want to leave the Batangueños," Ingeniero also said. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Jocelyn R. Ch. Christian V. Esguerra and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.; Associate Philippines, Inquirer Visayas, and Marvin Erika Gualbo, Inquirer Southern Luzon

First legal case filed against Estrada candidacy

First page of A1

a "presidential aspirant," asked the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to disqualify Estrada five days after the former president announced his political plan next year before 10,000 supporters at a rally in Tondo, Manila.

"The Constitution provides no presidential reelection. This is interpreted to mean that ex-President Estrada is not qualified to run for reelection in which he honestly disagrees," Lozano said in his eight-page petition.

Comelec Chair Jose Melo has said that a challenge to Estrada's reelection bid cannot be made until after he has filed a certificate of candidacy during the period prescribed by the poll body beginning Nov. 28.

Asked for comment yesterday, Melo said Lozano's petition was "too early."

"You only oppose if the man has filed his candidacy," he said.

ESTRADA: His spokesperson says the disqualification petition is premature as he has yet to file his certificate of candidacy.

"What if Erap did not file it?"

Estrada's spokesperson, Ilagan Estrada, said the petition was "so obviously premature that it almost seems as if Attorney Lozano is either making a mockery of the Comelec or deliberately making a laughingstock of himself to make headlines."

But Lozano said Estrada's proclamation on Wednesday that he was running again for president despite the absence of his formal candidacy, should give his petition a legal basis.

The lawyer said the Comelec should not dismiss his challenge as "premature."

Lozano said the lack of a certificate of candidacy was a mere technicality "that should be set aside in the interest of justice and fairness."

A little-known lawyer, Lozano burst into the Philippine political scene following the 1986 ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. He led a rabble-like "Mendiola Marines" demanding the arrest of the dictator from Honolulu exile to prosecute him at times became violent.

Ambulance-chasing lawyer

In the past several years, he has been involved in many high-profile political cases and was derisively ridiculed as an "ambulance-chasing lawyer," a term that applied to low-price attorneys shopping around for clients.

Lozano was the first to file impeachment charges against President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2005 over corruption and election fraud charges—allegations which she vehemently denied and which her allies in Congress quashed.

Lawyers claimed that Lozano's cases were weak and undermined legal moves against Ms Arroyo.

In June 2009, the Supreme Court dismissed Lozano's petition challenging a plan by the House of Representatives to convene a Senate-less constituent assembly to amend the Constitution as premature.

The court chastised Lozano, saying that while it had been liberal in entertaining questions of law this was not an "open invitation to the ignorant and the quixotic to file petitions that prove nothing but their unethical influx."

The Constitution bars "the President" from seeking reelection. Estrada claims that this did not apply to him but to existing Chief Executives.

A movie actor-turned-politician, Estrada won the presidency in 1998 but was ousted in the January 2001 Edsa II revolt over corruption charges. He was convicted of plunder in September 2007, but was pardoned the following month by Ms Arroyo.

Fearing his six-year trial, he was mostly under house arrest in the opulence of his sprawling Tanay estate.

Last performance

In a fiery speech on Wednesday at Plaza Ilaude thronged in Tondo, the 72-year-old Estrada said his run for the presidency "[also 2 months] be 'the last performance of my life," vowing to his cheering supporters, "I will not fail you."

Lozano told the Comelec that he was qualified to run for president and would do so unless Mayor Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., would himself seek the presidency. Marcos junior has not mentioned anything about running for president, but is known to be eyeing a Senate seat next year.

Lozano said he had suspected with the Aba Sayyaf and stopped bombings in Mindanao. He also worked to uphold consumer rights in the face of inflation in the 1970s.

He also noted that he had not spent or stolen millions of pesos (campaigns' money

"Whether other presidential aspirants are television, he believes he is also qualified. He has done many good things for country and people that the other candidates have not done," Lozano said, speaking of himself in the third person, in his petition.

Noynoy gets taste of 'mob' treatment

First page of A1

day's induction of new appointees at Quezon City Liberal Party (LP) standard-bearer Sen. Benigno Aquino III described how he felt being "mobbed" in a public appearance shortly after he declared his candidacy for president.

"It was at this house that I first tested what it is like to be mobbed," he said.

"Some people who passed by me took our chair handkerchiefs and wiped them on me. I thought there was something dirty on our face when I looked back at them, they were wiping themselves (with the handkerchief)," he added.

"I thought, isn't that what people do to saints? But I am still alive."

Take a deep breath

The lone son of the late former President Corazon Aquino narrated another incident while he was speaking on a stage at a rally in Bacolod City recently.

"When I walked near the edge, someone reached out and wiped my chest. The crowd made me stop. In other words, this just shows how me people have accepted us," the senator claimed.

"In sum, when we go out of the car, we really have to take a deep breath. Because even if you just hold on your head (for a handshake, they'll grab [your whole body] and push you. The last time someone did that to me, it was my father," he added.

"When they get you, they won't let go."

A job at Joker

Aquino spoke during the induction into the Liberal Party of Cavite Gov. Ernesto "Nyong" Mailkai and several incumbent officials of the province. Mailkai used to be with the LP faction of Environment Secretary Lito Atienza.

More than 100 people were in the audience when Aquino spoke during the ceremony at the Bulay Expo Center in Cebu, Darrell City.

"I hope (Senator) Joker (Arroyo) sees this. A Volkswagen is our enough," Aquino said, referring to Arroyo's joke that the LP faction supporting Aquino could fit into a Volkswagen Beetle.

Claiming his and his vice presidential candidate Sen. Mar Roxas's public ratings "have shot up and more are coming in," he added: "I advise Joker to buy more Volkswagen stocks."

Cavite surveys

Mailkai said his informal surveys in Cavite showed that Aquino and Roxas were the choices of 60 percent of voters.

"I don't want to promise anything, but you just watch the (election) results, I think Cavite is going to carry Noynoy and Mar," Mailkai said.

"Almost all of the incumbent mayors of Cavite are here. Out of 23 municipalities and three cities, we have two-thirds here, almost 100 percent of board members, and 80 percent of vice mayors," he added.

In a press statement, the LP said the Ormoda clan's political party in Cebu, Bando Ormoda Pundok Kauswagan, had thrown its support behind the Aquino-Roxas ticket.

"Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña, former Cebu Gov. Emilio Osmeña and former Senators John Henry Osmeña and Jinggoy Estrada have set aside their political differences to back Aquino and Roxas," the statement said.

CRYSTL Gov. Nyong Mailkai takes his oath as a Liberal Party member from Sen. Mar Roxas, LP president, as LP presidential standard bearer Sen. Noynoy Aquino rejoices. Mailkai used to belong to the LP faction of Environment Secretary Lito Atienza. ED CAÑO

Differences patched up

In Bohol, the convention said, actor Cesar Montano has been designated the LP provincial chair and is running against incumbent Gov. Erico Aumentado for the province's top executive post.

In Pangasinan, Rep. Victor Agbayani, who comes from a prominent political family in the province, will be the LP gubernatorial candidate, it said.

The statement also said the delegates and the Aquino of northern Mindanao had patched their political differences, with Rep. Teofisto Guingona III and former Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta joining the LP's "People's Coalition" senatorial slate.

Aquino said not everyone applying for LP membership would be accepted to make sure that no "late arrivers" would get in.

Bicol visit

On Sunday, rounds now yellow shirts and tied yellow ribbons around trees and posts along Daanghaliwa from the Albay towns of Polangui up to Ligao and Legazpi City, as motorcade Aquino.

Aquino said the three main issues the next administration should address were job generation, education and healthcare.

"We are here ... to listen to the people," he told the crowd at the St. Agnes Academy's gymnasium in Legazpi.

Aquino was accompanied in the Albay sortie by his party's senatorial candidates, including Acosta, Municipio Rep. Rodolfo Biazon, Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros and Bukidnon Rep. TG Guingona.

Acosta, the LP vice president for Mindanao, spoke of the chances of Filipinos for real change.

No answers from Noynoy

The broad concerns of Aquino and Acosta, however, sparked an enthusiasm in certain sectors, among them a farmers' group, which said they wanted to hear concrete proposals for Bicol's farmers who are into coconut farming.

Delia Paz, regional chair of the Alliance Magsasakid ng Pilipinas (ANP Bicol), said the current farmers wanted to know from Aquino what livelihood programs and other support mechanisms he had in mind that would directly help them.

She said there were no concrete answers from Aquino. With a report from Joy M. Sta. Ana, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Piña bridal gown for Korina

Frontpage A1

ent Ilocos vice presidential candidate, will marry TV broadcaster Korina Sanchez at Cathedral rites today at Sta. Domingo Church in Quezon City.

About 3,000 guests are expected to pack the vast church, which has been heavily barricaded as early as Tuesday.

"The entire barig, a talagang buong bus ang loob ko at isang tulog na lang mapapormal na ang aming pagsasama [Shall I? Shall I?]. I'm all set to formalize our union," Korina said. "We'll go on honeymoon and enjoy ourselves before we go back to work."

Serpentina-style

Sanchez will wear a serpentina-style gown by Pepita Albert, one of Manila's most talented yet low-profile designers.

It is made of pasta of hand-embroidered piña, which Albert also designed. Flowing trains, leaves, cutlasses and tiny flowers are traced to discover the sequins for symbols.

The gown is empire-cut, with gently-draped bust line, with gussets that here close to the body but gently flaring at the knee to flow into a mermaid tail.

The five-meter cathedral train is gathered in her lower hips, also hand-embroidered with fine beadwork.

It will be strapless, with a very small modern pareado.

Loose French twist

The bride's hair will be swept up like a loose French twist, adorned with a golden parasic [decorative comb].

Several small brooches on her wedding dress were made from components of her late mother's gold tambourine necklaces. Some were fashioned into gold earrings—the only jewelry Sanchez will wear.

"Then we decided, it didn't need a wedding veil," Albert said. This unconditional detail was considered as that the line from head to toe will have a faultless flow.

Sanchez will carry a cascading bouquet by florist cousin, Margarita Pures, consisting of cattleya, dahlia and sampaguitas. Her bridal shoes were designed by Grace Ermac, made also of ecru piña with gold tambourine buckle. Bobbie Pineda will do the bride's makeup.

Sanchez's three brothers, who will give her away, will be in stylized barong by Randy Ortiz, who is also doing Rojas' barong.

Father's inspiration

True to the Filipiniana motif, Rojas will wear an organza camisa chino under the pike barong. It has the tiny geometric embroidery on the front inspired by the 1950s barong favored by his father, the late Sen. Unity Rojas.

Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, the 15th presidential candidate and one of the principal sponsors, declined to give an advice to the betrothed couple, saying that there is no knowledge in love.

"I think they have no problems. They're doing the right thing and [today] will mark a beginning. I think [an unsolicited] advice is unnecessary because they're doing OK," he said.

Rojas said he and Sanchez decided to choose Aquino because the senator's mother, former President Corazon Aquino, who died on Aug. 1, was one of their original sponsors.

"And it's also good since he's going to be my boss once he becomes president," Rojas added.

Nirung Noynoy

Aquino said he was making an exception when he accepted the offer to become one of the wedding sponsors. He explained there was a belief among Filipinos that single ones who agree on be a wedding sponsor would have a hard time getting married.

"But I also want to get married," Aquino said.

"I just couldn't say no to Mar, but I don't really accept offers to become a wedding sponsor because I also want to be married," he said, while joking that it wouldn't feel awkward hearing Korina and Mar address him as "ninong".

"It feels like '10 years was added to your age.' Aquino again joked. "[Today], I will follow in his footsteps because I'm a sponsor and Mar will walk [down the aisle] first."

WEDDING Workers spruce up Santa Domingo Church in Quezon City for the wedding of Sen. Mar Roxas and broadcaster Korina Sanchez. JOHN ROYLLER

Lacson belies Mancao claim of kill orders

Frontpage A1

Records appear conflicting on when the supposed conversation in the car actually took place.

In his affidavit, Mancao said it took place in October 2000. But in his testimony at the Manila Regional Trial Court recently, he said the purported conversation occurred while Estrada was out of the country and that this was around "September to early October" 2000.

A check with the Inquirer archives showed that Estrada was in the United States on Sept. 6-13, 2000 during which he attended the UN Millennium Summit. He was never in the United States in October, the archives showed.

Lacson's defense

"It must be emphasized, however, that during such time, I was also out of the country with President Estrada," Lacson said in his affidavit.

"Since I was also in the United States at that time ... I could not have been possibly present in the car with Mancao ... (It could) not have given (Aquino) the alleged 'order' to neutralize Ducut and Corpus," he added.

Lacson said Rozas was also in Estrada's US party. Lacson included Rozas' affidavit as an annex to the sworn statement he submitted to the panel headed by Senior State Prosecutor Peter Ong.

"In fact, during the official trip to the United States with former President Joseph Estrada, I was in the company of Sen. Manuel Roxas," Lacson said.

Roxas' affidavit was not immediately available and the Liberal Party senator could not be contacted for comment.

Nov. 6 hearing

The DOJ panel decided to summon Roxas to testify in the preliminary investigation in its next hearing on Nov. 6.

The panel also summoned ABS-CBN anchor Ted Failon and GMA News reporter Mahil Pulido to testify on their interviews with Mancao in which Mancao spoke of supposed offer and payments for him to testify against Lacson.

The interviews were made and aired before Mancao, who was then in the United States, was extradited to the Philippines and agreed to turn into a witness against Lacson in the double murder case.

In his counteraffidavit, Lacson said the murder complaint filed against him by Ducut's daughters was based on hearsay and that "a personal theorist" would readily show that they completely relied on the affidavit of Mancao."

Lacson cited a Supreme Court ruling to the effect that any complainant or witness should have personal knowledge of the crime being alleged.

No sun to grind

Lacson also said that in a Senate hearing on the Ducut case in April 19, 2001, Ducut's daughters—Emily Ducut and Sabina Ducut-Reyes—never mentioned anything about him (Lacson) having an ear to grind against the politician.

"None of them ever mentioned that their father had previously told them in 1996 that should he die, I would be responsible for such death," Lacson said.

"Clearly, their belated disclosures on this supposed conversation were a mere afterthought desperately designed to implicate me in this case," he added.

Lacson also cast doubt on Mancao's allegation about the car conversation by presenting Mancao's own court testimony that it was possible that he wrongly heard that an order was given to kill them.

"With a clear admission that Mancao was not an all-ovision of what he actually overheard that my alleged involvement now becomes rather doubtful," Lacson said.

"I welcome who is certain of his narrations will remain staunch despite the continuous efforts of the defense to demolish his credibility notwithstanding," he added.

"On the other hand, a witness who convictions will find it hard to stick to his story and will find himself eventually entangled in the web of lies he has woven. Sadly Mancao falls under this category."

Lacson told the panel that he didn't expect to get justice "under this administration."

"The charges filed against me were not made in pursuit of justice ... but were made in a desperate attempt by the Arroyo administration to persecute me," he said.

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OPINION

Total gun ban

EDITORIAL

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS LAST WEEK said it would enforce a total gun ban next year in an effort to minimize poll-related violence in the runup to the May 2010 elections. This is certainly welcome news, and we hope that no exemptions from the gun ban would be issued. With a total gun ban, only policemen, military men and security guards on duty and in proper uniform would be allowed to carry firearms.

The planned total gun ban is not new. It was first enforced during the first election after the Edsa Revolution held in 1987. The Omnibus Election Code prohibited the carrying of deadly weapons in the polling places and within a 300-meter radius of the precincts during the registration of voters, the voting and the counting of votes. It also prohibited the carrying of firearms outside the residences or places of business of firearms owners during the election period.

Similar rules were issued by the Comelec in a resolution in 2001, and again in 2006. But despite the law and implementing resolutions, election violence occurred in all the elections held after the Edsa Revolution. According to the Philippine National Police Information Office, a total of 600 people were killed in the eight elections held after 1986, or an average of about 86 deaths in every election. That is intolerable, not many, no one should die in any election.

It is heartening to note that the PNP itself recognizes the need to have a total gun ban. Last Tuesday, it proposed a total gun ban and its proposal was endorsed by the National Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee, the country's highest coordinating body for law enforcement concerns.

We hope the PNP and other law enforcement agencies of the government will not just pay lip service on the banning of firearms during the election period and strictly enforce the total gun ban. Once the authorities relax the rules, hundreds of applications will be filed, and many of them will most probably be granted, making the ban practically ineffectual.

How to fare with the enforcement of the total gun ban, the PNP with the help of the other law enforcement agencies, will have to conduct an intensive nationwide campaign against loose firearms which were not issued to the 1.1 million as of May this year. That's too many guns which, in the hands of many violent and irresponsible people, could be used to create chaos and violence during the election season.

The Philippines is perhaps the No. 1 country in the world in terms of fatalities from election violence. It is a record that we should be ashamed of, and whose repetition in the coming elections we should try to prevent. In any decent, civilized democratic society, no one should die in an election, unless the death be due to a natural cause or an accident.

After the election in May 2007, the Asian Human Rights Commission said the deaths, violence and corrupt practices that occurred during the Philippine polls were "extremely appalling." The commission added: "This violent exhibition of democracy has cast serious questions upon the capability of the government, in particular the Philippine National Police, to execute their duties and responsibilities to protect the lives of the people, enforce the law and uphold order."

The commission also said that "it is not only the culture of violence that is at fault but the tolerance of such excessive violence that goes unchallenged that contributes as well."

The law (Omnibus Election Code) is there. The Comelec, with the endorsement of the PNP itself, will soon impose a total gun ban. It only remains for the government, and particularly for the PNP and other law enforcement agencies, to exercise political will and to strictly enforce the law.

Freedom to Tibetans

FOREIGN COMMENT

PRESIDENT OBAMA WAS TOO QUICK TO PLEASE CHINESE leaders when he recently put off a meeting with the Dalai Lama. Obama's considerations for foreign leaders' sensibilities can be a virtue, but in this case he showed China's leaders and Tibetans alike that he is more susceptible than his recent predecessors to pressure from Beijing.

The editorial chair: Presidents Clinton, George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush held in the White House with the Dalai Lama had no adverse effects on US-China relations. Obama should be using his first encounter to reassure China's leaders that their interest would be best served if they granted cultural autonomy and religious freedom in Tibet. — The Boston Globe

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ATM of last resort

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

BEN OR LOSE, SOME POLITICIANS TEND TO treat Mindanao Indios like an ATM of last resort. Nitoy en Iloilo to pad their kudu, invested in Carolyn's. Arguellas told a Philippine Free Institute seminar in Cagayan de Oro. Lanes all as sovereign there to puges over their clothes.

Bilateral chat when Pagdin Garillaneta "phone pad" ended about? And didn't that violate the bilateral, between Aquilino Pimentel III and Juan Miguel Zubiri, over the 12th Senate slot?

Electoral integrity—or Fraud—determines the quality of governance. It impacts on lives of people, especially those who "draw life's short straws." Take the life expectancy for Maguindanao. At 33.6 years, it lags almost a generation (a Union's 70.9 years. Thus, national and international efforts to curb electoral cheats forward the backdrop for PPI discussions.

The 400 election officials in 366 dozens for investigating with Afghanistan's first ever elections, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon demanded. President Hamid Karzai reluctantly admitted poll swindles. A November run-off is set.

"It now knows sweeps clean." Commission on Elections Chair Jose Melo lodged charges against 113 officials for fiddling with the 2007 elections. Nicodemus's Aries Rufo reports. Most operated in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Maguindanao provincial election supervisor Lintang Bedol allegedly whipped out a gun. She has been jailed, its gullies pointed out. That removed an even when we strolled through one of Ta peral's graves but clean corrupt campaign.

"My mother is in prison," a tearful voice said, about 1 a.m. Sunday. "Please help us." Ms. Bedol, 50, had drugs were burnt before the police eyes.

The mother now languishes in a female prison. "She has no connection to him," Cherry said. "But my kids are relieved." He'd also been in the crosshairs drugs. "He often beats me though."

Both proudly pointed to their school. Paula likes to cuddle. "But I have an ex-police." Clara's schooling has a look and a pencil

Carla and Paula waved cheerfully as I left. But sadness blanketed me. Both toiled profitably despite Glendower me. Both would probably drop out before Grade 6. Out of every 100 kids who enroll, 39 will quit along the way. The number of functional illiterates in Mindanao (Central, a almost 12 percent. That's better than next door Bukidnon's 27 percent.

Many Clarins and Paulas won't have the schooling to escape life sentences to poverty. Their Sheila lives much a 0.36 (Mcdonnell Douglas) economy. Dead larger we are pledged to meet by 2015: to achieve universal primary education.

The pleasing field isn't level for Carla and Paula in their barangay and Kinabe in Cebu or Ahasa in San Marco county. ("Hep. Hillary Ann says a not our neighbor," my daughter e-mailed. "His Tatoosal house is in the next city... thank heavens.")

Akeito and Kotera get immunizations then, dental care, regular pediatrician visits, etc. Often, poor children have don't even have a birth certificate. Their schools are substantially worse than those attended by children of "gated" enclaves.

Deprivation alters even their life expectancies. For kids in less-developed countries, infant mortality a four times higher for the poor than for the rich. UNDhuman Development Report 2009 notes. Infant deaths here are triple that of Malaysia's.

Equalizing is some thing the World Bank notes. But equity is another. Equity isn't about equality. It involves, health, schooling or other issues. "Rather, it is the quest for a situation ... where personal effort, preferences and initiatives—and not family background, caste, race, or gender—account for the differences in future people's economic achievements."

"Three basic decisions underpin success of Nordic countries like Norway, Sweden or Denmark," says Columbia University Earth Institute's Jeffrey Sachs. "First, they prioritized education. Second, they built a vigorous private sector. And they made sure no one was left behind."

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Coming home

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

BIS or Ph.D. in an American university coming home to teach in UP or some other school is expected as an act of insanity. Despite the doom and gloom of the 10 today, characterized by closed walls, closed factories and closed minds, we still think our compatriots are lucky to be there. When I was there last June, several people asked me why I hadn't thought of living here, assuming my finely honed skills I wouldn't go hungry. I just smiled, finding the challenge of arguing for a paradigm shift too daunting.

Quite apart from that, the last thing Filipino students abroad can count on is that their government is behind them. Or probably more to the point, the last thing they can count on is that their government is behind them—lifting their wallets from their back pockets. That's true, in fact, not just of Filipino students abroad, that's true of Filipinos abroad. Hell, that's true of Filipinos at home.

Not all the complaints of Filipinos abroad about their country are whiny. Or not all the reasons they give for not wanting to go home are petty. Some of them are perfectly understandable. Chief of them is that at least countries like the US have rules, the Philippines does not. At least countries like the US offer means of redress, quite apart from avenues of success, the Philippines does not. You're a refugee in the US, you're a second class citizen. You're a Filipino in the Philippines, you're nothing.

All that brings the—surprise, surprise—to the government. August's jobs may not be hated, of course his favorite government, but it may be headed after it's gone.

What gives me to hope is the spirit of solidarity that has sprung up of late in all its ugliness. I do not just mean our spontaneous or instinctive coming together in the aftermath of the typhoons, though that is impressive enough in itself. Truly, the Filipino comes to be a disaster in times of disaster, being himself himself to come to the aid of the beleaguered. I do mean more beleaguered than he. It is a right to behold.

More than that, I also mean the spirit of volunteerism that has risen in support of Benigno Aquino's candidacy. That is the astonishing thing. That Filipinos should show incredible generosity spirit after calamities is normal, that Filipinos should show independence or become before elections, that is not so normal. The volunteers aren't just coming from the youth, they're coming from young and old, artists and artisans, actors and dancers. They're coming from all walks of life. They're coming from people who want to help their favorite candidate and directed them to the appropriate volunteer groups. They want to help for no other reason than that they do, the same compulsion that led he exiled youth. Maybe it's the same thing. They want to give relief to the country—for a more permanent way.

That's what gives me to hope Filipino students, retired Filipino doctors and engineers, and just about all of our compatriots abroad who refer to do something more in life will want to come home. Nothing else will do. Nothing else will be as fulfilling as going to a place or not. Contentment is to own place.

People do need a reason to call a place home. People do need a government that does not drive them away by a mile that banishes justice and the hope for a better world. People do need a government that keeps their home by giving proof their talents are not wasted but used—the creative genius of the Filipino in particular—to for the country to a dazzling finale. It will take more than global recession to push our compatriots out of expatriation, it will take national inspiration to pull them back into repatriation.

A deeply discussed government goes and a deeply trusted one comes to take its place.

Like beleaguered soldiers, they might all be home before Christmas.

A fluid situation

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

DURING LAST FRIDAY'S GATHERING AT THE Lanzis that the organized, vice presidential aspirant Loren Legarda expounded on her program of government, anchored on her longtime advocacy of protecting the environment and integrating the harsh effects of climate change. But she made no mention of the party she belongs to, the Nationalist People's Coalition, or the presidential candidate she hopes to run with, Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. (the NPC's announced standard bearer). Even when cornered, Ms. Legarda has said over hailed to declare his intention to run and it would have sounded premature of Legarda to commit him. Speculations are that Legarda is encouraged rather than baffled by yet another poor Nat NPC leader Eduardo Cojuangco of sufficient funding for his campaign, apparently regarding Villar's failure to state her party and presidential candidate was not received well by the NPC brass, especially by its big, Mar Cojuangco. At least as she ended her speech, they all stood up and left without even shaking hands.

* * *

Legarda appears to be in it to win it, and hunting a number of political suitors may be the reason. If Eseñero takes too long to make up his mind or he doesn't win at all, or decides to be the running-mate of Sen. Manuel Villar, as is being heralded, Legarda is ready to leave the party if it insisted she wait hunting herself running with Lakas Int'l Gilbert Teodoro, judging from his statement that she's hunting for a candidate who would put the environment above all else. But Legarda's Lanzis also fulfilled the other of the seven vice Filipino markers, which puts her right in Villar's company in addition, she has stressed her desire to remain in the opposition.

Recent reports that the Nacionalista group tactician Sen. Antonio Trillanes will support Escudero's candidacy complicates the picture for Loren and the NPC. Behind the group are Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Villar's arch enemy in the Senate, and chilling political operator Gen. Jovito Palparan, and there is talk that they will push for Escudero. I'm not surprised, because the well-organized and well-heeled Magdalo has been searching for a leader of Cebu now to have united for the first time in decades to support Noynoy despite an overriding conviction among them that he's woefully unprepared for the gargantuan task he is seeking. Yet the simple reason that they are against the Garchitorena by Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia.

* * *

The argument peddled by some lawyers and jurists that the issue of whether former President Joseph Estrada can appeal should be left for the people to decide is very dangerous. Its proponents say that if the people should vote him back in power, who is to question their supreme wisdom? Besides, convicted criminals are not appealing a penalty by disqualifying them again? The problem with leaving this issue to the people is that it opens the latter to manipulation by shifty politicians. All they have to do is create—as the present Arroyo administration has done—a climate of fear, uncertainty, confusion and instability. Then, on the back of political awareness of some of our people, this could lead to chaos. Moreover this argument endorses constitutional provisions that were carefully deliberated upon—and rejected—by appointed representatives of people in a plebiscite—an incomprehensible. The results could be frightening in the future.

* * *

At a recent forum of presidential aspirants open only to peoples' association, lawyer Adel Tamano was not allowed to join candidates Nicanor Escudero, Gilbert Teodoro and Sen. Richard Gordon, and pesky for MP candidate Manny Villar. And rightly so, many of the people's groups represented in Sen. I remember how during the UP vice presidential debate, Republican candidate Sarah Dilia had to appear against Democratic Sen. Biden, who had been a senator for 30 years and headed the senate foreign relations committee. Recently Aquino and Villar are said to have agreed not to appear in debate with their counterparts who are taking lowers in the surveys, since it would just pick up the latter's ratings. Maybe that is the reason why Tamano was not invited as well. Aquino and Villar are not sure whether they could handle questions well. They have to show up—to prevail.

Stuck in a sandbox

PEOPLE DON'T TAKE LOSING LIGHTLY.

That is an understatement when it comes to volleyball competitions here in the Philippines. If one team loses, its members allege that the referees were bribed by the other team. If a chief player does not perform well in a big game, students accuse him of taking money from the opposing team. In cheerdance competitions, if a team with a winning history does not qualify for any of the top three spots, they mean that the judges were biased or made downright outrageous mistakes about the routine that did win.

YOUNG BLOOD

Amanda Grace M. Cabanizas

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from shy twenty-something and below —Ed.

These kinds of competitions foster a culture. While they provide a healthy dose of excitement and passion inside the coliseum, they also create enmity between two freshmen who belong to either school who have not even met one another but who already dislike each other. In the end, a tournament designed to forge harmony between universities and colleges turns out to be an arena for squabbling. Its awards and honoring banned several other schools and their students. Students of rival schools behave like loathing kindergartners forced to play together in a small sandbox.

I guess this reflects the culture of competition here in the Philippines, which is most clearly highlighted during the election season after the election period, we always hear losing candidates claim that they have been cheated, or that the proclaimed winner does not possess the necessary qualifications for the position, or that the election results were tampered with. The electoral tribunals are always mere decoy in election cases because the candidates, the same people who pledged to contribute in a fair and honest election process, do not know how to accept defeat and return gracious in into private life. It seems as if they have accepted the word "losing" from their vocabulary, and are intent on finding excuses, if only to spare themselves the agony of having to accept the possibility that they were just not popular or credible enough to gain the votes needed to win. Even the mentality of blaming others but never themselves that gnaws at the credibility of our election process and fosters the lack of willpower in our government. Such usefulness also are like battering lambs gamers in the same sandbox.

Israeli contests, our universal rivalry against common foes has. If we are to compete, we must accept that the risk of losing is a real fact of existence. When we played pickaninnies as children, someone had losers evidence. When we play DOTA, someone employs better strategies. When we engage in debates, someone comes up with more sound arguments. Even in meets or in school, we always face the possibility that there is someone in the same workplace or class who can do better than us.

This is unavoidable, but that does not mean we have to retreat to name-calling or belittling whenever we are placed in such a situation. We have to learn to be gracious in defeat. If we attack those who triumph, we do not recognize their accomplishments and we only punish ourselves. Not only do we lose in the competition, but we also lose ourselves if we choose to wallow in contempt and blame others for our setback.

There are lessons behind every loss, and knowing them should help us improve ourselves. Maybe we were not ready. Maybe we underestimated our opponents' aspects of the game and we need to work on them. Or maybe someone was simply better than us.

We need to reflect more on what losing can do for us, instead of focusing on what losing does level us of. We ought to remember that one loss is one thousand opportunities for us to redouble ourselves. We cannot let defeat take away what every person, including ourselves, deserves: respect. It is when we lose respect for others and for ourselves that we deserve to be stuck in the same sandbox as losing candidates who feel bitter about their defeat and end up pouting, foaming and gaining nothing.

Losing is part of life. We win some, we lose some. As we should be humble in our victories, so should we be gracious in our defeats. That way, we won't lose the most important thing: the sense of who we are, and what we can be.

Amanda Grace M. Cabanizas, 23, is a second year law student at the San Beda College of Law.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Weapons of mass inspiration

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ACTORS ON TV AND THE BIG SCREEN HAVE earned our admiration for honing their celebrity and fame into "weapons of mass inspiration," signing on as spokespersons for an organization or for a cause. Oftentimes, they do this for no compensation other than giving life to their own beliefs and convictions. Or, for the reward they receive about it, expanding their fountain beyond the usual filmography or videography.

Nicole Hiblan, an Oscar-winning actor who sometimes finds himself in political conflict supported, was in the news recently when she appeared on Washington, D.C.'s Capitol Hill to address a congressional hearing on violence against women. Her presence at the hearing, said news reports, "event...cyclonic-spur, disappointment and raised some eyebrows."

Kidman had been invited to a hearing of the House foreign affairs subcommittee on international organizations, human rights and over-sight. The committee has been holding meetings on three debate the International Violence against Women Act, a companion piece in the US law against the Irene against Women, which would penalize foreign governments where women's rights are not supported.

As Australian wire report says the legislation has stalled in the past, but that the current sponsor, Democratic Rep. Bill Delahunt, said he and others planned to reintroduce it in April. Apparently, the committee's star power was mobilized to add urgency to the deliberations on the bill, which would affect America's relations with some key allies.

"I felt here just to be a voice," Kidman told the panel of men and women members of the US Congress. "I rely on the people I've met to make the case."

Kidman, speaking as a goodwill ambassador for UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, "told stories about the violence suffered by women in different parts of the world. She said: 'I'm a Australian actress and married to a man who has Australian parents and in her here.'"

"These champions stand and deserve our support, the pain and trauma it causes, then it just might be a powerful message about their celebrity."

Actors, performers, celebrities already have a powerful platform on which to mount their own thoughts and feelings about political, environmental and social issues, as well as a wide array of advocacies. And when the projects are important and powerful, as Kidman already enjoy enough clout in the industry to choose their roles, produce their own movies or shows, or influence the creative decisions that go into certain alternative images of women, thus emphasizing more empowering, more positive and uplifting.

* * *

THIS being election season, a lot of these luminaries personalities have already announced their intention to run for public office. Inside-tion they're banking on the power of celebrity—name and face recognition, natural support with the public, identification with an actor's persona—to propel star seats to the treasury of power and make her put in immediate themselves in voters.

Interviews with these candidates-to-be on their reasons for running invariably produce replies like "I want to make a difference" or "I want to unite the people of [name the locality]" or else "to help a greater number of people." Celebrity membership in the recent dynasties of "Undoy" and "Pepsy" would try have opened the flood-gates for candidacies by recent descendants of Hollywood. Some even go so far as to explain that their foray into politics and rural poor areas have "opened their eyes" to the reality of poverty and misery in the country.

Here's get our wrong. Many of them are dedicated, true sincere in their desire to help, and not public office as simply an extension of their public role and identity. And some may even be qualified for the positions they aspire for.

But as Nicole Kidman's simple answer indicates: Before seeking a broader platform in order to effect society's advocacies, one should be "responsible for the power we have" and that is celebrity itself, not just in one's self or progress in the business, but in the audience as well as the greater public. That is an actor's primary duty.

Erap, abandoned

NEWSSTAND

John Nery

MAJOR "INSIDE" SWAP: EJERCITO ESTRADA (to the ex-president) soon formalized declared his intention to run for the presidency (at again, he bathed in the genuine affection of supporters gathered at Nasa Ayuda Dreamdome in Tanza, Manila. Part of his appeal is his sincere and overriding belief that, as he expressed it most recently, "loving the lowest point to my life, the poor did not abandon me."

Without a doubt, many from the contemporary he calls his own made it out with fair during the years he was unconstitutionally underserving a political trial. But like many mainstream Manila issues or that are raised in his name, this assertion, that he was not abandoned by the poor...his natural constituency, is to speak...needs to be examined. "Walang nag-iwan" (nobody left behind) is the "No body gets left behind," perhaps we should reexamine this was the most assertive "Nobody leaves anyone behind") is a potent slogan.

To measure the depth of love and endurement, let's track popular opinion "during the lowest point" in Estrada's checkered life: his ouster and his immediate aftermath.

A Social Weather Stations survey conducted from Jan. 16 to 19, 2001, in the middle of the televised impeachment trial, found that only 36 percent of voting age Filipinos in Metro Manila believed he was guilty of the charges against him. Belonging to the demographic class E—others we can equate with "people power" contingent—believed the charge that he had pocketed jueteng money in connive 10 percent of class AB—part of the "elite" network Estrada set his ouster—believed the accusation.

However, in the Jan. 27 survey (again conducted only in Metro Manila, but a week after Estrada left Malacañang), 55 percent of class E said they now believed that particular charge (for which, incidentally, he was never convicted). Belief in

On the three question of his money, only 36 percent of the class E respondents sampled in the Jan. 27 poll said his replacement by Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was completely unacceptable. A double-digit of class E, some 32 percent, said they were not sure.

And on the fundamental issue of the meaning of the second People Power uprising, class E was more emphatic: fully 77 percent said they thought it was a "unfolds rally" for the restoration of the presidency, in contrast, only 9 percent of class AB in spokesmen polled in the Jan. 27 survey said it did.)

Even more crucial to any theory of abandonment, the late January findings were confirmed by the mid-term SWS survey in Feb. 2 to 7, 2001.

Perhaps Erap should take a look at the numbers again.

* * *

FURTHER TO THE PREVIOUS COLUMNS ON the challenge of reconstruction: Former Speaker Jose de Venecia has kindly provided me a copy of a letter he sent to Amirah Prime Minister Ibrahim Bevara, making the support of a disinterested and impartial international "debt for environment" scheme.

The letter's key paragraph (without the italics, JDV said) reads as follows: "Our proposal is simple. It is that creditor nations and creditor institutions cancel the option of converting as much as 50 percent of the yearly debt-service payments they receive into investor equity in debt-climate change programs in their debtor countries. These projects would include reforestation, watershed, water conservation, alleviation energy, mass housing, education, health and social infrastructure. I am sure financial engineers can refine this basic formula and think up variations."

They can, indeed. Perhaps the financial advisers behind the leading presidential candidates can begin to devise ways to unlock the socioeconomic potential of over $250 billion in unrecognized service payments.

Of the many opportunities presented by President Gloria Arroyo when she assumed power in 1986, the possibility of using her moral stature to ask the country's creditors for some form of debt relief is among the billion-dollar issues missed by the Marcos regime but, in the wine of quite a number of Filipinos, the most powerful for lifting the crushing, decisively, out of poverty. That she failed to do so, or even to set back in a sense of how, or and great trust in her external leaders, gives Sen. Noynoy Aquino an unusual advantage, if he wins in the country's first post-"Edsa" election. So has the chance to co-da history.

* * *

THANK YOU NOTES. In the last several weeks I took part in a few memorable forums. I would like to mention three in particular, as a way to give thanks to their intrepid hosts.

Last month, the Philippine British Society invited me to speak at its monthly meeting. The provocative question I was asked to address: "Are Filipinos innately talented comedians?" Quite humorous, as one can imagine, a very difficult act to follow. Good thing I had the use of material that is inherently Manila's comedic Philippine politics.

Last month, too, I addressed the University of Sto. Tomas hosted the 15th edition of its highly successful Jubilee Journalism training program. The vast majority of participants were from the non-UST, from as far as Davao City and Santa Cruz, Ilocos. "Catholic journalism," was my topic. Inevitably, catholic. I tried to make distinctions. The keynote last question, however, was both pointed and plaintive: is "Catholic journalism," relevant to the lives of the poor in the countryside?

And last weekend, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process conducted the annual UNDP-funded Communications for Peace-building workshop for media practitioners. On this its hosted I by My role was simply to discuss the link for conflict and violence inherent in both our news response and our argument culture. I found the questions from the participant of a remarkably high order, definitely in argument form.

* * *

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IN THE NEWS

Pagasa Administrator Prisco Nilo

Root issue is credibility

LETTERS

ANALYZING THE STATEMENTS of the Iloilo running "president-rubber" in the various forums so far held, one comes to the conclusion that all of them adhere unfortunately to the same pernicious solutions to Local misconceptions about the underlying problems facing the nation. Even on the primary issue of graft and corruption, The various aspirants are merely in front rather than in advancement.

Thus, these aspirants are at a loss as to what platforms to present to the electorate in order to distinguish themselves and the political parties they represent from other members.

The 2001 elections is one character, built down to credibility! Who among them is the most credible and most likely to exist to and implement decent positions/solutions with no reasoning political will?

To the electorate: Think!

—WILL T. JOSUE,
former judge,
4366 Emmanuelle St.,
San Valley Subdivision,
Paranaque City

SC must revisit Pimentel decision

IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR THE ELECTION Court to take a second look at the Pimentel vs Comelec case.

With due respect to the Court, the Pimentel case involved a constitutional candidacy (1992) filed in connection with a national election, for which a COC could be filed until the last day before the start of the campaign period. Considering a motion under the same case for the Election COC, Pimentel was found guilty of permanent campaigning.

Sec. 80 of the Omnibus Election Code cannot be applied in the 2001 elections. Being an unconstitutional election was the only purpose for the early filing of COC's to give ample time to the Comelec for the printing of official ballots. Then, Sec. 15 of RA 9006 clearly provides, among others, that "any person who files his COC within this period shall only be considered as a candidate on the date of the campaign period for which he filed his certificate of candidacy."

For purpose of the 2001 elections, candidates are required by the Comelec to make an early filing of COCs on or before Nov. 30, while the campaign period for national positions, on March 2001 for local positions.

Clearly, it is unfair, if not totally illegal, for the latter citizens to act on the advance for COC before the actual campaign period starts, with the intention that he/she can run a candidate. Just therefore charge him with premature campaigning for entertaining pre-filed COC during the period when the law does not yet consider him a "candidate."

Besides, it appears that the Court's discussion on the issue was an obiter dictum, a mere reasoning or opinion of the Court holding a matter under the case (for the Election COC), Pimentel was found guilty of premature campaigning.

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—ATTY. ERICAR SLAM T. ESG.
51 East Capitol Drive,
Barangay Kapitolyo, Pasig City

Regulate or ban plastic bag use

MANILA "SHOULD" FLOODED THE streets, roads, bridges, waterways, esteros, and other public places with plastic bags of various sizes, shapes and colors.

Calling all concerned environmentalists. Please persuade our lawmakers to enact a law ASAP that will regulate, if not ban, proper use of plastic products, specifically those mentioned above.

Decades ago, we were accustomed to the multi-purpose "binayi" bags for our shopping needs, storage of foodstuffs and even for discarding waste materials. In this instances, they can be useful again. They may be costlier to make but in the end of the day, they will come out cheaper, safer and cleaner.

—EDGAR ALAN C. ESG.
51 East Capitol Drive,
Barangay Kapitolyo, Pasig City

Erratum

The editorial yesterday stated that ex-President Joseph Estrada was convicted of plunder in connection with the P545 million heroin seizure in November 1999 and August 1998." The second date was a typographical error. The phrase should read: "between November 1998 and August 2000." The apologizes. The Intelligence's plunder decision can be read at http://canlaw.ph.groups.yahoo.com/group/lawlist.

With Pay, Tarlac, residents use a hand ferry to make their way through the flood.

On securing RP from calamities: Why GMA is a failure

I DISAGREE WITH THE INQUIRER'S Oct. 13 editorial titled "All eyes on Manny."

If "Undas" and "Simang" had caused floods and landslides that did not result in widespread deaths, missing and dead persons, the Arroyo regime would now be all over the place slamming cards for a job well done. And the regime would have been justified doing that, if, during this last couple years, it focused on preventing our forests from logging and foreigners, on guarding our mountains and valleys from the convicted-coal-gutted environmental miners, on shielding our rivers and lakes from irresponsible subdivision developers and garbage dumpers and on enforcing enlightened protocols concerning the management of dams and dikes.

But the Arroyo regime (some corrupt, responsible)—not only its eye doing to jail but also for doing the opposite.

The Arroyo regime is the incumbent vehicle of collective efforts to secure the people against calamities. But although linked with a huge budget (the people's money) every year, it has practically done nothing. The presidents of the Arroyo regime are meant to uphold the 1987 constitution proscribed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, namely liberalization, deregulation, privatization and privatizing local governmental functions. In our country with a corresponding share on the UN-IMF rules for example, in the pursuit of those priorities, the Mining Act of 1995 was "constitutionalized" by the former regime, signaling the opening of our forests, mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes and seas...for environment to pillage—to legalized despoliation and plunder.

During the eight years—the last twenty years, President Marcos (if Arroyo could have made a difference in ensuring the security against calamities, but she did not. But eight years in power and, before, she denied to the role of the most proposition for calamities. Only a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) bureaucrat, a current Ayer Children, director of UNICEF Asia and the Pacific has presented "very good news." The Philippines is the Philippines. If the Philippine economy is "very good," as he claimed, would there be widespread poverty and unemployment where people are driven to migrating to dangerous areas and to consuming every resource they can from Mother Earth in order to survive?

Perhaps the UNDP director should apply for retirement in this country to actually see and feel the hell of his pronounced. As far as Filipinos are concerned...such the exception of President is never highly rewarded but none worshippers in Malacañang...the only way to progress is sermon implementation.

—ARMANDO ENDONG,
Unit 311 Union Square
Condominium,
101 10th Avenue, Cubao, QC

Peace negotiations with MILF mere exercise in futility

A LETTER WRITER JOHN DOUGLAS Cay wrote here that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) negotiations are "exploratory" (Inquirer, 10/29/00) and that "peace talks" should be pursued. Herein Bobong should be the point. He means of this war freak, former President Joseph Estrada, is commander in chief of the Armed forces of the Philippines.

Let us go to the Koran. The MILF has for its ultimate goal the setting up of an independent Islamic state in Mindanao—never mind the predominantly Christian population in the island. They god has never changed and will not have change until or few sun-standing until giving finally falls.

The Supreme Court has already declared that any "peace agreement" with the MILF that would violate the territorial integrity of the Philippine Republic is totally unconstitutional and null and void. So, what "peace talks" is Dabawenyo talking about?

—STEPHEN L. MONASTYRI,
slmonastyri@yahoo.com.ph

Governance is our task too

COMMENTARY

Dennis N. Mananzan

IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE RECENT calamities, and in the run up to the elections, the terms "politics" and "governance" have moved beyond the vocabulary of politicians and the news media and into the lexicon of ordinary Filipinos. For most people, however, "politics" is understood as the work done by politicians and "governance" as the function and of government, exclusively.

It is high time to question this view account for much of the blame being placed solely on the shoulders of government for the apparent breakdown of government's performance in the face of recent disasters. The private sector and people in general cannot absolve themselves of blame through their shirking their only responsibility to participate in governance.

The government, mandate, the state and includes civil society organizations and the private sector, because all three are involved in most activities, and politics is explicitly the concern of every citizen.

"Governance," as defined by the United Nations Development Program, was a decade ago and long accepted in public administration, is the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs. It comprises the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations and mediate their differences. Clearly, it is not solely the domain of government.

Harry C. Bauer, senior fellow and co-director of University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, and Robert T. Kudrle, Professor Rice-Governing Economy and Public Law, "add more on the view that the role of entrepreneur in government requires a change in the way politicians in the practice are to be perceived, involving nothing less than a paradigm shift in the meaning of democracy and civil agency in government involves collaboration and empowerment more than control. It will require not only looking at the structures and processes but an emphasis on the people involved as well as the tools. The shift can be seen as a move from seeing citizens as clients, customers and beneficiaries to seeing them as active and co-owners of public goods, and the role of public leaders from providers of services and solutions to partners, educators and organizers of citizens action.

In order to achieve this, Bauer advances the view that government needs to be "problem-solving in a non-partisan manner." Politics is the process of negotiating diverse interests and values in a public forum. Politics, in this sense is citizen-centered, productive and pluralized.

The change in the nature of politics can re-

Dennis N. Mananzan is a theologian and philosopher and a doctoral candidate at the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance.

Across the NATION

Abductors of 7 forest guards face raps

BETTER BUSINESS
Since farmers market road were opened in Bongao, Sulu, the market has been alive with local products as well as those from Malaysia

'Balik Probinsya' program doubted

By Joey Gabieza
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Eastern Visayas expressed reservation over the effectiveness of the "Balik Probinsya" scheme introduced by the government in light of the devastating typhoons that hit Metro Manila.

Director Lescita Cortillo on Saturday recalled a similar program launched seven years ago to address the problem of illegal settlers in Metro Manila, but it failed.

She said thousands had availed themselves of the programs but returned to Manila after a few months to stay in the provinces.

"They considered the program as a way out of a recession only to return back to Metro Manila after two months. They used the financial assistance given to them as their fare for their return to Manila," Cortillo said.

Millions of pesos in government funds spent on the programs were thus wasted.

But she did not give any figures as to the number of those from Eastern Visayas who availed themselves of the program and the amount of financial assistance given to them.

She, however, said the program should be given a chance.

Earlier, Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone had said that he would implement the back-to-the-province program.

Evardone said the provincial government would provide transportation to those who chose to return to the province.

They would also receive P20,000 to start a business and another P20,000 to buy housing materials.

Cortillo said that provincial government of Biliran had identified at least 45 families who were projected to avail themselves of the program.

Cortillo said the DSWD would monitor the program implementation by the local governments to ensure its effectiveness.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET

Body recovered

THE BODY of the last missing resident of Little Kiltungan buried by the Oct. 8 landslide was recovered on Sunday afternoon.

Chief Insp. Mario Maximo Jr., town police chief, said the faceless body of Gavale Public 31, was found in a canal being cleared of debris.

The 44-year-old resident was missing since the area noticed the body from the rubble that he had cleared. Pobelo's head was later found buried in a nearby pile of mud that the backhoe had scraped, Maximo said.

The recovery of Pobelo's body brought the total number of fatalities from the landslide in Little Kiltungan in Barangay Pugong to 11.

Jhoisar Cardio, Inquirer Northern

■ LEGAZPI CITY

Soldiers declog waterways

ABOUT 20 truckloads of garbage were removed from clogged waterways in the city and Daraga town in Albay and disposed of during a cleanup drive on Tuesday by soldiers working in the area in cooperation with local government officials, schools and civic organizations.

The drive involved the declogging of rivers, creeks and canals, as well as expanding of strained public walks and cleaning up of an eyesore mahogany planted on walks along Rizal Avenue, an eight-kilometer main road in the Daraga town proper.

Capt. Rudolph Banzuela, the Army's 901st Infantry Brigade spokesperson, said the activity was part of the military's humanitarian mission and disaster preparedness and preparedness measures.

Ray M. Rasos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Dengue cases down

THE DEPARTMENT of Health (DOH) on Monday said the number of dengue cases in the region went down 19 percent this year compared to the man recorded last year.

Cecilia Aquino, DOH dengue monitoring organizer coordinator, said that from January to October, there agency recorded 4,685 cases, while 874 cases were noted in the same period last year.

No 2009, the DOH monitored a total of 800 dengue cases in the region, with six deaths.

This year, the agency documented two deaths—one in Pasacao town in Albay and the other in Naga City in Camarines Sur. **Ray M. Rasos, Inquirer Southern Luzon**

NPA owns killing of military intelligence man

DAVAO CITY—THE COMMUNIST NEW People's Army (NPA) has owned the killing of a military intelligence agent whose name had figured in the abduction and murder of Rebelyn Pitoy, daughter of top NPA leader Leoncio Pitoy or Commander Parago.

Alonzo Saratiago, political director of the NPA in Southern Mindanao, said Cpl. Orlando Dubrigeon was supposed to be arrested by the 50th Philing Region Command, which is headed by Parago, but he resisted and fought it out with the rebels.

Santiago said the incident happened in a gambling house contrary to the statement of the 10th Infantry Division that Dubrigeon was attacked while attending a religious activity in a church in Barangay Malidegu in Maguindao (inside) at past 1 p.m.

Santiago said the arresting team was forced to shoot Dubrigeon after he resisted. He died while his bodyguards, identified as Jeffrey Lubrin and Julito Ada, were wounded.

Capt. Emmanuel Garcia, chief of the Public Affairs Office of the 10ID, said the two were not Dubrigeon's bodyguards but civilians.

Parago earlier named Dubrigeon as one of the suspects in the kidnapping and murder in March of Rebelyn, a high school teacher.

The killing prompted the Commission on Human Rights to conduct a public inquiry. Military intelligence agents denied the allegations while testifying behind drapes.

One of them was Dubrigeon, who had said he learned about the death of Rebelyn only from the media.

The NPA team also sighted in the area other suspects in the killing of Rebelyn, Santiago said. He identified them as Cpl. Wenzie Cacumpasan and one Sergeant Ecoth.

The two quickly fled, he said.

Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Mapagu, commander of the 10th ID, considered the killing of Dubrigeon and Cacumpasan of two soldiers.

"We pray that the school of justice grind to the interest of truth," Mapagu said. **Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao**

BUTUAN CITY—POLICE OFFICIALS ARE FIRM ON filing charges against a disgruntled Manobo tribal chieftain and his followers who were responsible for the abduction of seven forest guards while monitoring illegal mining and timber poaching inside the Agusan-Davao-Surigao watershed area here.

Chief Supt. Leo Colingasan, police chief for the Caraga region, said kidnapping charges were being readied against Andoy Bebeng and his followers, mostly former communist rebels.

Colingasan's move was in sharp contrast with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which declined any court action.

Five guards, who were freed in Surigao after four days in captivity, signed affidavits admitting any criminal action against their captors.

Two others were freed a day after the Oct. 23 abduction.

But Colingasan disregarded the affidavits, saying he was determined to pursue the case against Bebeng, who went unscathed after he figured in six similar abductions involving DENR personnel in Agusan del Sur in the past years.

"These affidavits were executed under pressure and threat by the abductors. We will go on with our case. This case would be a precedent against law violators," Colingasan said.

Mount Caga, spokesperson of the multinational Task Force Watershed, welcomed the filing of charges against Bebeng to show that the government was determined to stamp out banditry.

"Nobody is above the law. The government must show that the law is applied to all and send message to lawless groups in Caraga that is never business," Caga said.

The DENR's reluctance has fueled speculation that the abduction was a mere ploy by corrupt environment officials bent on extorting and entrenching campaigns to protect the environment.

Several regional environment officials said to be in cahoots with the illegal loggers could be behind the seizure.

Editha Bulaos, environment regional director, dismissed the allegations as unfounded.

Bulaos said the capture agreed to release for men after the DENR crisis committee promised them that the agency would help resolve their demands.

"Although the release was unconditional, the DENR promised to them that we will really look into the resolution of their problems," Bulaos said.

Caga, however, insisted Bulaos not to give in to the demands of a "lawless group" which could only compromise the interests of the watershed.

"The government should not compromise our the purpose—the watershed. Giving in to Bebeng's demand will only promote kidnapping and lawlessness in Caraga," he said.

Aside from the removal of a station which monitors the transport of mineral ores and logs inside the watershed, Bebeng's group also pressed for the cancellation of the communities-based forest management agreements in the Silogay area, the awarding of ancestral domain titles to Manobos and other indigenous groups in the area and the approval of customary farming.

The forest management agreement is a project of the DENR, under which people's organizations or tribal communities are given authority to enforce rehabilitation and development plans for 25 years. **Froilán A. Gallgedi, Inquirer Mindanao**

Editor Tonipet B. Melendrez • Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

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40 winks in between 63 km: Tireless Kenyan tops KOTR

By Cedrik P. Tupas

KENYAN RUNNER RICHARD MUTWOL capitalized on the absence of some of the big names in Philippine marathon to easily win the 2009 Adidas King of the Road (KOTR) race Sunday morning at the Bonifacio High Street in Taguig.

Blowing the limelight with the Kenyan was Nhoa Ann Barrera, a member of the national pool, who topped the women's race.

The 22-year-old Mutwol achieved the feat just hours after posting a 60th-place finish in the 42.195-kilometer Subic International Marathon Saturday night.

His clocking of one hour, 21 minutes and 17 seconds earned him the P50,000 top purse.

The time, however, was way slower than the 1:07:28 that four-time KOTR winner Eduardo Buenaventa set when he ruled the race in 2007.

Buenaventa bagged 40th from joining the race to focus on his preparations for the Southeast Asian Games in Laos.

Former champions and national athletes Bo-An Barayuga and Mercedita Majapil-Benderen also did not see action.

The Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association earlier issued a memorandum banning SEA Games-bound national athletes from competing in races beyond 10K.

Daenelia Lim, a modern athlete from Bel Kinnarts U, took second place, finishing two minutes and 39 seconds behind Mutwol.

Barrera finished the race in 1:33:23 to beat veteran runner Mila Pale and triathlete Ani Karina De Leon, who finished second and third, respectively, to the cure that drew about 7,000 runners.

Christabel Marino, who ruled the Mike Marathon early this month, reigned supreme in the 10K race in 37:47, while Reynand Sevallenos (33:27) topped the men's division.

Topping the 5K fun run of the event organized by Rudy Biscocho were Oblessing Bombasia (gold medalist Morris Gaare (20:37) and Michelle De Vera (27:22).

SHAKEY'S V-LEAGUE

Lady Tams seek q'finals today

By Cedrik P. Tupas

FAR EASTERN U TRIES TO CONTINUE its surprising form when it tackles St. Benilde today for a quarterfinal berth in the Shakey's V-League Season 8 second conference at the PRISM Flying V Arena in San Fernando.

The Lady Tamaraws eye their fourth straight victory in the 2 p.m. showdown with the Lady Blazers, who are coming off an impressive victory over Lyceum last Sunday.

Clashing in the second game at 4 p.m. are Arellano Chiefs and Lyceum.

The Lady Eagles are aiming to end a two-game slide against the Lady Pirates, who are still winless in three games.

Showing its title credentials, FEU stopped defending champion San Sebastian in five sets Sunday.

Cherry Nunag and Shaira Gonzales sparkled for the Lady Tamaraws, who have racked up victories over Arellano, Mapua-Cervantes and Lyceum, after bowing to University of Santo Tomas two weeks ago.

Finishing an improved game, the Lilies (2-1) were filling the void left by Maricris Mendiola, produced a spectacular effort with 21 points in the same matchup behind visionary.

Gonzales, meanwhile, has steadily provided the Lady Tamaraws with another deadly option on the attack.

The Lady Blazers easily disposed of the Lady Pirates, handing grabbing crumb. Thirteen Bacbac-Bautista remains to believe that they have moved on from their NCAA finals loss to San Sebastian.

NERIZ Talaroc(left) sets up the Lyceum attack off St. Benilde's Cha Vitug and Kirby Kwan in Sunday's game won by the Lady Blazers. AUGUST SEBASTIAN

Hugnatan, Cardona share best player honors

OUTSTANDING IN THEIR TEAM'S STERling early-season wins, Abalos's Reynel Hugnatan and Mark Cardona of defending champion Talk 'N Text grabbed the Limelight two weeks into the BPC-MLPhilips Cup.

Hugnatan, the 6-foot-4 power forward, helped the Aces improve to 4-0 by averaging 17 points, 8 rebounds and 3 assists in Gimbal's last two victories.

Cardona, the 6-foot guard who was named Finals MVP last year, was just as impressive with a 20.5 point clip that went with his 5.5 rebounds and 3.3 steals to help the Texters remain unbeaten in three games.

Their solid performances earned them the BPC-Accel-Philips Power Cuts Top Players of the Week for the period Oct. 19 to 25.

"We've made a concerted effort to get beyond the ball in the post and it is paying off," said coach Tim Cone of the Magnolia Ice Cream native, who had 14 points and four rebounds in a 100-79 win over Coca-Cola last Friday.

Hugnatan also did most of the damage in the 105-96 tripping of Barangay Ginebra, firing with 20 points and eight rebounds.

Cardona pumped in 16 points in a 103-78 demolition of Smart Gilas and 25 in a 100-80 triumph over Sta. Lucia Realty.

But Texters coach Chot Reyes said there's more room for Talk 'N Text supporters to be happy with Cardona.

"I think for the first time since he came to the league, he's cast in the top 10 in statistics," said Reyes. "And he got his points now with fewer shots."

Cedrik P. Tupas

NCA Stagfighter of the Year series winds up

THE NCA STAGFIGHTER OF THE YEAR WILL be known today as the National Cockers Association holds its final cocking derby of the season at the Visayas Sports Arena in Cebu City.

Dubbed as the NCA Sing Big Town, the happening Complacor-sponsored derby honors the breeders/cocks for the performances in the eliminations and the semifinals.

Ulster Sequiamoco's "Erwin" with 14.5 points, Gerry Ramos "Against All Odds" (13.5) and the "ZT Archangel Dragon" entry of Jerry Palomino, Bing Rabida, and Al Magsayo.

The Sing Fighter of the Year will receive P250,000 with the runner-up getting P150,000.

Expectations are high for top cocker Patrick Redondo to pull an upset in today's derby. His entry, "Sagipsan Complacor," won the championship in the Sept. 6 derby with 5 points.

Boy Jalandoni and Bobby dela Cruz's "BJ Sagpig," Ricky Alejandro's "Scorpio Bronto AP" and the entry "Cadilla LZ" are also expected to do well after taking previous legs of the series.

DELEGATION head Nely Ballesteros, Margot Duremin, Wayne Osmeña and Dephil's Jay Augustus Young (from left) receive Visayas' trophies from Milo's Lester Castillo.

Visayas 1st Milo Little Olympics champion

THE REGIONAL PAIR BOUNDING OUT STANDING VIEtories on all fronts, surged past the favored National Capital Region on the third day of competition Sunday to capture the overall crown in the inaugural National Milo Little Olympics in Cebu City.

Trailing the NCR lists for most of the meet, the Visayans counterpart racked up 621 points after dominating performances in athletics, swimming, lawn tennis, volleyball, badminton, chess, squat takraw, rope, table tennis and gymnastics in the elementary and high school divisions.

NCR settled for runner-up honors with 551 points, followed by Mindanao with 377 and Luzon with 366.

Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña and Department of Education consultant Joy Augustus Young, received the perpetual trophy in behalf of Visayas during the colorful awarding ceremonies.

The team will keep the trophy until a new champion is crowned. But it's right rules the competition for three straight years, it will receive a replica of the perpetual trophy.

A showdance exhibition and a fireworks display brought the curtains down on the 12-sport competition that gathered 1,200 student athletes nationwide.

"I congratulate all of the participants, especially Team Visayas," said Osmeña. "I commend Milo for helping building athletes because the last that they can be."

George Llanera, Contributor

Roach finds new winners for RP boxing

FREDDIE ROACH DID NOT HAVE ready praises for the national men's boxing team but the world's top trainer, he with the least one for veterans, said he would be disappointed if our boxers failed to land medals in this year's Southeast Asian Games.

Now's that again?

"The girls can really fight," Roach told Eddie Alvarez and his wrestlers at Hotel Friday's lineup in Baguio in town.

"The girls," Roach continued, "are very talented."

* * *

The national men's and women's boxing teams were quietly formed last week.

Ed Picson, executive director of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, hosted the composition of the line squads over the weekend.

Among the men's team are Bill Viernes, Barry Tabanero, Jean Tipon, Charlie Suarez, Rey Saludar and Joegin Ladon.

Picson said there boxers "were in the benefit and gave the best impression on judges."

Roach, in a way, had a hand in the selection as a member of the panel during the Baguio bouts.

* * *

Picson said Roach noted that the rank boxers have the boxing sense.

BARE EYE

Alexis Trinidad

"But he said the boys could use more international exposure," Picson said.

"Roach said they should also throw more punches," he added.

Manny Pacquiao's head trainer did not single out anybody among the men.

But our boxer who clearly caught his fancy was veteran Rosie Allonsia.

"She's very cocky, confident and aggressive," Roach said.

* * *

Of course, Roach was the least surprised when told later that Allonsia won a silver medalist in the world championship.

Anyway, forming the women's squad are Josie Gabuco, Annie Albania, Alice Kate Aparri and Michelle Marquez.

"The girls have techniques and they fight like professionals," Roach noted with obvious glee.

* * *

He added: "It's good to see good female boxers here in the Philippines. I actually think that the girls are better than the boys."

Roach did not say it, but would be also be gratified if the men's team matches or beats the women in medal production in this year's Laos Southeast Asian Games?

Both squads will be facing the formidable Thais, perennial Filipino boxing rivals, in Laos.

* * *

Anyway, with the inclusion of women's boxing in the 2012 Olympics, a new development in the area of medal expectations has started.

Actually, even before Roach could give the big nod to members of the RP women's team, local boxing authorities were being quietly mollified about the possibility of a Filipina boxer beating her male counterpart in the race to win the country's first Olympic gold medal.

In fact, there were misgivings on the formation of the RP men's team in the Laos Games after (he was again dominated by recycled international-bouts headed by Harry Tañamor and Juan Tipon.

This, of course, cannot be said of the RP women's squad.

"There could still be changes in the men's team, for whatever reason," Ed Picson explained.

Dacudao rules Singapore Open q'fying with 65

FILIPINO LUKE DACUDAO SHOT A 7 under par 65 Sunday to rule the first of a two-day qualifying for the $5-million Barclays Singapore Open from Oct. 29 to Nov. 1 at the Sentosa Golf Club.

The Davao-based Dacudao, who turned pro last year, became the second Filipino to make a date with the national open which will feature a crack field led by Phil Mickelson, Padraig Harrington, Ernie Els and Geoff Ogilvy.

Automatically qualified as former Asian Tour winners are Frankie Miñoza, Angelo Que, Jeev Pagsanjan and Juvanna Mendioro.

Also needed are Mars Pacay, who finished joint seventh with Dacudao in Sunday's Edamelar Aston Open, and Antonio Lascuña by finishing in the top 65 of the $300 Asian Order of Merit.

The next four players after Dacudao, all of them shooting 66's, also qualified. Ehren Salvador, the other Filipino in Sunday's qualifying, shot a 71.

Five more players will complete the starting field after Monday's qualifying at Sentosa's Tanjong course. Among the hopefuls were Michael Blust and Gene Bondoc, who missed the halfway cut in last week's Edamelar Aston Open.

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NBA luring fans back with lower ticket prices

LOS ANGELES—FIRST FOUR DAYS AFTER the NBA and its referees ended a lockout of more than a month by agreeing on a fresh contract, the 2009-10 season will begin on Tuesday with daunting challenges to be faced on and off court.

While the NBA sees some cause for optimism following up-to-games after last month's agreement, bringing the fans in remains an ongoing concern despite signs of a recovery from the global economic downturn.

NBA commissioner David Stern expects revenue to fall over the coming months, regardless of teams' efforts to lure fans through reduced ticket prices.

Stern said last week the season ticket renewal rate was down from 79 percent to around 76 percent and it would be crucial for the league that television ratings continued to prove its attractive any decline in revenues.

Compelling comparisons on the North American basketball in the early guarantee to keep fans happy and television viewers glued to their sets, and the early indications suggest a exciting season is on the cards.

Lakers vs Clippers

The Los Angeles Lakers loaded their championship defenses on Tuesday against city rivals the Clippers loosening they and their Hollow challengers have made at least one high-profile signing over the summer to strengthen their rosters.

While the Lakers have brought in 10-year league veteran Ron Artest to beef up their defense, the Cleveland Cavaliers have added Shaquille O'Neal, the former Celtics have acquired Rasheed Wallace and Vince Carter has joined the Orlando Magic.

The Lakers come again unbeaten by 11-time All-Star guard Kobe Bryant, look the best of the West and semi-quality in a starting lineup that also includes Spanish forward Pau Gasol and experienced guard Derek Fisher.

Perhaps the biggest question mark over a successful Lakers defense hinges on the form of seven-foot center Andrew Bynum.

Injury-prone over the last two seasons, Bynum has worked hard on his defense and, with his natural ability to dunk, rebound and block, he would give his team a strategic edge against versatile imposs if he plays close to his best.

"We can average anywhere from 11 to 20 points," Lakers forward Lamar Odom said of Bynum's prospects. "He's been so efficient [preseason], and he's a great two-down player." In Artest, the Lakers have acquired a volatile forward and a formidable defender known for his physical presence. Reuters

Yankees clinch AL title, return to World Series

NEW YORK—THE NEW YORK YANKEES advanced to their 40th World Series by rallying with a three-run in the fourth to beat the Los Angeles Angels, 5-3, in game six of the American League championship series.

The Yankees left-hander only but battled back in the fourth then relied on two more runs in the eighth to win the series, 4-2, and reach their first World Series since 2003.

Pitcher Andy Pettitte earned his 16th playoff win as the Yankees turned to closer Mariano Rivera for the final six outs Sunday and he delivered in front of a crowd of 56,171 at Yankee Stadium.

The Yankees will now try to win their 27th Major League baseball title as they begin the World Series Wednesday at home against the Philadelphia Phillies.

The defending World Series champion Phillies defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers in five games in the other semi-final.

"It is going to be a battle. It will be a fight just like MLCS," said Yankees pitcher CC Sabathia who will start game one of the World Series.

New York's game six against the Angels was postponed from Saturday because of poor weather.

Yankees starting pitcher Pettitte labored with six strikeouts and just one walk while his teammates chased Angel pitcher Joe Saunders from the game in the fourth.

NEW York Yankees' Jorge Posada (left) and Alex Rodriguez, Mark Teixeira and Derek Jeter celebrate after winning the AL title series.

Pettitte (2-0) allowed just one run on seven hits in 6 1/3 innings. The veteran left-hander became the all-time pitcher in playoff history, earning his 16th win to break a tie with John Smoltz.

Yankees converted a six-out save to preserved the win, as the Yankees added an insurance run in the eighth.

Johnny Damon led two hits, including a home-loaded, run-one single in the fourth inning.

Alex Rodriguez also had two hits, but it was his home-loaded walk in the fourth that provided the eventual game-winning run for New York.

This will be the first World Series for Rodriguez.

Vladimir Guerrero collected three hits for the Angels, which stayed alive with a win in game five on Thursday but couldn't muster the magic to force a game seven.

"We have to keep our heads up and get better," said Angels manager Mike Scioscia. "They earned it but we have to get better. AFP

AP PATRIOTS' Brandon Powell (left) tries the rebound to Thailand Tigers' Korrea Haruetsee on Sunday's game in Pasig City.

Indonesians blast KL Dragons

INDONESIA SATRIA MUDA BRITAMA climbed into a tie for second with the idle Philippine Patriots after pummeling the Kuala Lumpur Dragons, 93-67, Sunday in the Asean Basketball League at the Bukit Jalil Arena in Jakarta.

Julius Fajeal Achmad and Yuco Little combined for 22 points while Filipino import Benny Bajar added 12 to lead the Indonesians to their first home game triumph since their Oct. 10 opener, when they bowed to the Dragons, 74-69.

"Seven players scored in double figures, that shows that we played as a team," Satria Muda coach Victor Bontog told the Jakarta Globe.

"I was not best game so far, but the boys should play better. We gave up lot of three pointers, so we need to tighten up our defense."

Indonesia and the Philippines have 2-1 records behind the perfect 3-0 slate of the Singapore Slingers.

Kuala Lumpur, the only team in the fledgling six-nation league that didn't tap a Filipino import, slipped to fourth at 1-2.

The 5-foot-9 Bajar, who previously suited up for the Alaska Aces in the PBA, completed a three-point play to spark a 14-5 run that gave Satria Muda its first double-digit upround, 26-16, from a close 12-11 lead.

Satria Muda, which shot 54.4 percent from the field, opened the fourth period with a 10-0 spurt, including seven straight from Indonesian Yosbel Sembiring for a 75-

Jeannine M. Pajo

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RP shuttlers 10th in World Juniors

THE PHILIPPINES SECURED ITS 10th finish of 11th place in the World Junior Championships in Arapito a 5-0 loss to Sanchel Denmark Monday at the Stadium Sultan Abdul Halim in Kedah, Malaysia.

Led by Peter Gabriel Magnaye, Paul Jefferson Vivas, Philip Ayor Sicuena and Mahrose dan Mario Acuña, the Filipinos amazed themselves of a record result after an earlier 3-1 sweeping of Singapore.

"This is the first time that the Philippines finished No. 10 in the world juniors," said Philippine Badminton Associations delegation head Federico Lantoro Jr.

The young nationals improved on the country's No. 25 ranking in 2007 with a strong showing in the 36-nation tournament that included powerhouse China, Busan, Malaysia, Thailand, England, Chinese Taipei, India and Indonesia.

Vivas and Magnaye sealed the Philippines' 3-1 win over Singapore with a straights win 21-17, 22-20 decision of Jia Yi Boh and Jeffrey Wong Han Gang in the boys' doubles.

Magnaye also teamed up with Acuña in the mixed doubles when they downed a 21-16, 21-19 win over Wee Greg Jeffrey Wong and Ting Ting Ting.

The Nationals split their singles matches with Lacuata downing Soon Lee Gerald Ong, 21-9, 21-16, in the boys' division, before Gilda Castle bowed to Jocyan Chen, 21-7, 21-11, in the girls' action.

The Philippines also scored earlier victories over Canada (4-1) and England (3-1) after dropping its opening-day assignment against India (2-3).

Jeannine M. Pajo

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Feliciano tops Nuvali Outdoor Challenge

FELICIANO

VETERAN MOUNTAIN bike rider Frederick Feliciano found his way back in the top.

Feliciano, a 2005 finishmen Adam Hansen edged teammate, conquered the single terrain to win the cross country-elite class of the Nuvali Outdoor Adventure Challenge recently in Sta. Rosa-del Carlos, Laguna.

"It was very difficult," said Feliciano, an Illaga, Nueva Ecija, native who also finished third in last summer's Subaru Otoy Marathon. "There were many ripples and I was just glad to finish the course."

Feliciano, who pocketed the P10,000 top prize, overtook overall runner-up Jake Marsh Alcontar after the first 12K loop of the multi-terrain course.

Former motocross champion Glenn Aguilar similarly regained his winning form to dominate the elite open four-team competition.

The two-day Get Weekend event drew over a thousand off-road bikers to Nuvali, an emerging 1,750 hectare hilling destination in the outskirts of Metro Manila.

"The course was very challenging," said Alcontar, a 25-year-old Army private from Davao.

Alvin Bernardo, another veteran Army rider, teamed up third in the elite class.

More sporting events, including weekend outings, marathons and cyclo competitions are lined up in Nuvali, Ayala Land vice president and Nuvali general manager Jon Ramos said.

"The response is overwhelming," said Ramos. "We will certainly entertain more corporate bike activities like this here in the future." Jeannine M. Pajo

SPORTSWATCH

Las Piñas stagfest fires off

TOP LOCKERS FROM THE PROVINCES engage their counterparts from Metro Manila today at the NCAP 3-Stag Derby at the Las Piñas Coliseum.

The field of more than 1500 fights begin at 4 p.m., said LPC pit manager Jessie Ramos.

Among former Vice Mayor Ruben Tagaba, Albert Martin and Barmy Ty, the derby has drawn participants from as far as Isabela, Pangasinan, Cavite, Pampanga, Bicol and Negros Occidental.

The champions will receive a guaranteed prize of P400,000.

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Race 5 - (1400m) - Maiden 3YO (Local) Class 5
Race 6 - (1400m) - Maiden 3YO (Local) Class 6
Race 7 - (1400m) - Maiden 3YO (Local) Class 7
Race 8 - (1400m) - Maiden 3YO (Local) Class 8
Race 9 - (1400m) - Maiden 3YO (Local) Class 9
Race 10 - (1400m) - Maiden 3YO (Local) Class 10
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METRO MANILA STUDY

Smoking blamed for 1 in 5 heart attacks

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

OUT OF EVERY FIVE CASES OF a heart attack in Metro Manila, one can be attributed to exposure to secondhand smoke, the Department of Health (DOH) said yesterday, citing the results of a survey conducted by anti-smoking advocates.

World Lung Foundation (WLF) and the Paris-based International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (The Union) calculated that between 30 and 20 percent of heart attacks in Metro Manila could be linked to secondhand smoke depending on the number of hours of exposure per week.

The groups based their findings on a survey conducted by WLF and DOH earlier this year as well as published global secondhand risk estimates for acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) from exposure to secondhand smoke.

Secondhand smoke, also known as passive smoking, is defined as the smoke from the burning tip of a cigarette and the smoke exhaled by a nonsmoker from a smoker.

According to the WLF, secondhand smoke is most toxic.

Children who are exposed to tobacco smoke are at increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome, acute respiratory infections, ear problems and severe asthma.

Studies also showed that exposure to secondhand smoke for more than 21 hours per week can increase one's risk of a heart attack by as much as 62 percent.

The WLF-DOH survey showed that 52 percent of people in Metro Manila were exposed to secondhand smoke every day in workplaces, restaurants and other public places.

While most nonsmokers reported that they get upset when their are exposed to secondhand smoke, only eight percent said they asked the smoker to put out their cigarette.

The DOH and its partner agencies—the

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Globe launches Bangon Pinoy program to help rebuild Filipino communities

GLOBE employee volunteers, clad in work boots and gloves, and armed with wheelbarrows, shovels, brooms and dustpans, help clean and bring order back to the QK Camacho community in Pasig, Manila's

Globe, a leading telecommunications company in the Philippines, embarks on a massive effort to help Filipinos affected by the floods to rebuild their lives.

Globe Bangon Pinoy program is an integrated effort that allows communities severely affected by typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng to benefit from relief operations, financial assistance, network restoration and a series of community rebuilding activities.

"Bangon Pinoy is our way of rebuilding the country by lending a hand to those who badly need assistance during these times. The program enjoys the full support and cooperation of the communities, the local government, Globe employee volunteers, and even partner NGOs. As we keep the Filipino 'bayanihan' spirit alive we are optimistic that we as a nation will be able to overcome this ordeal," said Ernest L. Cu, President and Chief Executive Officer of Globe.

The program also underscores the commitment of Globe to 100% full restoration of its network services in areas damaged by the floods.

For its initial operation, Globe visited Barangay Kalinga Camacho of Marikina to do clean up drive. It visited Concepcion Integrated School to restore the school's broadband internet connection and bring new computers for use of students and faculty. In cooperation with the local government units and different church groups several Library Towns, Library Internet, and Library Phone Charging stations have been set up in affected areas in Metro Manila and North Luzon.

Bangon Pinoy is also scheduled to distribute food supplements in Globe-Gawad Kalinga Bayan Animat farms in Luzon. It will visit Angeles City schools to bring new chairs, tables, and books and begin the construction of a two-classroom building.

"The program also provides a first of its kind offer to Globe subscribers, especially those located within the damaged areas," said Cu. Globe rebate offers one month free mobile service to identified postpaid subscribers and one week free load for identified prepaid subscribers, the amount of which will be determined based on their historical spending patterns. Rebates will also be given to affected Globe Broadband subscribers, covering the period September 26, 2009 until service in their area has been restored. Broadband subscribers will have the option to suspend their postpaid broadband service for a period of one to three months.

Through Bangon Pinoy, Globe helps local entrepreneurs get back on their feet by preparing short- and long-term programs that will help them rebuild their business. Globe will work with cooperatives to help businesses affected in North Luzon. Likewise, Globe load retailers in Marikina and Rizal will be given special assistance packages.

To date, Globe has provided relief packages to 17,000 families in Marikina, Rizal, Montalban, Laguna, and Pangasinan. Globe Bridgecom donated P5 million to remove thenvisible evidence that flood victims.

Globe has restored 80% of its wireless services and 92% of its broadband services in typhoon-affected areas including Antipolo, Pasig, Cainta, Taytay and Marikina.

GLOBE President Ernest Cu spearheads the cleanup drive in QK Camacho

Fernando: Marikina back on track

By Alfonso W. Lagos

MARIKINA IS NOW BACK ON its feet more than a month after Tropical Storm "Ondoy" caused massive flooding and destruction in the city, the top official of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) declared yesterday.

At the same time, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando praised his team for working together to restore the city. "If persons of which was submerged in flood waters at the height of the storm.

"We are officially ending the relief, recovery and restoration, as well as the assistance of Marikina after Ondoy's devastation. In our 30 days of work in Marikina, we have removed a total of 200,000 cubic meters of mud and garbage. Having said that, the next area we will be focusing our restoration efforts on," he said.

His wife, Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando, meanwhile, expressed gratitude to the numerous donors who helped in the city's recovery.

"Marikina is back on track. Thanks to the help of our countrymen and countless donors here and overseas, without which our city and people will still be mired in misery due to Typhoon Ondoy," she said.

To mark the completion of the city's cleanup, more than 1,000 MMDA workers and volunteers held a parade, walking with their tools and heavy equipment from Provident Village—where scores of top lawyers and doctors who helped in the city's recovery.

Aside from President, the MMDA also conducted cleanup operations in barangays Industrial Valley, Barangka, Tañong, Jesus dela Peña, Sta. Elena, San Roque, Calumpang, Sta. Elite, Malanday, Concepcion Uno, Fortune and Kangkong.

The MMDA chair, a former Marikina mayor, said that after Ondoy, the public should follow ordinances on proper waste disposal as well as those which bar houses from construction on the floor of water, causing floods.

TRICK OR TREAT
Children prepare to go trick or treating in front of a house in Barangka, Marikina.

Gov't and MILF doing a charade on Sinnott's kidnap

THE PUBLIC IS BEING GIVEN a mere stare or fanfare show by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the efforts to rescue kidnapped Catholic priest Michael Sinnott.

And the government is going along with the farce.

Most people—at least those in Mindanao—know who the kidnappers are. They are members of the MILF.

So illegal activities take place in MILF-held territories without the consent of, or orders from, MILF higher-ups.

The MILF statement that it's helping in rescuing Sinnott from the kidnappers is pure hogwash.

* * *

On a matter of policy, the MILF is obliged to exert its best efforts to help work out the safe and immediate recovery of Father Sinnott," according to MILF chief Ibrahim Murad.

Oh, yeah?

Of course, the MILF will be able to secure the 84th priest because he's been with them from the very start.

Sinnott's release is not a question of "if" but of "when."

When enough money is collected for Sinnott's release and turned over to his **MILF Kidnappers, then** he will be released.

* * *

The more the government goes with the farce about the MILF help in Sinnott's rescue, the more it loses credibility with the public.

"Undersecretary Ging ca ar gobyernon ng Samang mga Ikka-siyam pagmilo ay pati (The government and the MILF are taking in hot foods in the name efforts for the priest)," commented a Mindanaoan.

So, please, government and MILF—stop the show that's making the public puke.

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

* * *

Okay, it's understandable why the government is playing along with the MILF on the rescue efforts for Sinnott.

It doesn't want to antagonize the MILF because if it did, the Moro might walk out of the peace negotiations **with the government.**

So, there you are.

* * *

The controversial radio frequency identification (RFID) was not thought out by the previous leadership of the Land Transportation Office (LTO).

If I know LTO chief Arturo Lomibao, he wouldn't come out with such a harebrained idea of putting a tracking device on every vehicle in the country.

Even Philippine National Police (PNP) chief is much more intelligent than that.

His avoided controversies as PNP chief because he didn't do anything that would catch public attention.

Perhaps Lomibao was just ordered by people "upstairs" to force the RFID on motor vehicle owners.

So, whose idea was the RFID that would cost billions of pesos to communicate from the project?

Who else but the usual suspects.

* * *

On Nov. 22, our birthday, I plan to build a two-day medical mission in Tacloban City through my RX Good Samaritan foundation.

Although I'm not from the Philippines to make sure we can cope. But for the meantime, our focus is in Mindanao and Metro Manila," Diaz said.

Apart from the seminars, the PHF has put up a bomb and improvised explosive device (IED) detection unit to allow its men to familiarize themselves with the bomb signatures of different terrorist groups from other countries.

Diaz said that next month, the Philippines intends to join Malaysia and Indonesia in a tri-border police and prosecutor international program initiated by the National Bureau of Investigation as part of the global war against terrorism.

"Law enforcement agencies all over the world continue to maximize efforts to fight terrorism. This is a global war against terrorism and Philippine enforcement agencies are very much involved in efforts to counter terrorism," he said.

16 libel raps recommended vs staffers of 2 tabloids

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE QUEZON CITY PROSECUtor's Office has recommended the filing of 16 counts of libel against the officers and staff of two tabloids for publishing allegedly defamatory statements against a businessman.

In a resolution released last month, Assistant City Prosecutor Alfredo Agustin recommended the filing of charges against Jerry Yaranon, Percy Lapid and Erica Baltazar of Police Files Tonite and Jerry Yap and Gloria Galuno of Hataw.

The charges were based on a complaint filed last year by businessman columnist Noel Cruz who claimed that he was maligned in two columns which came out in the publications.

Among the allegations in the columns were that Cruz, a former officer of the National Press Club (NPC), produced the club's funds and collected money using the group's name.

Agustin found probable cause against the respondents based on sworn statements executed by Assistant City Prosecutor Elizabeth Rosario-Pagtilao which dismissed the libel complaint against the respondents.

He also cited a motion to consolidate the libel cases into one case to be filed with the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

Bail was recommended at P36,000 each for the respondents.

To catch terrorists, NBI teaching its men to think like one

By Jeannette I. Andrade

TO MERCILESSLY TERRORISTS, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is gearing its agents and investigators to think like one.

Only recently, the NBI's counterterrorism unit (CTU) started conducting seminars and lectures which would allow its men to (figuratively) pick the brains of terrorists in order to best them.

NBI-CTU Chief Regional Director Rizalino Diaz said the focus of the seminars on bombings, explosives and mines were the lessons learned in Mindanao where most bombings in the country have so far occurred.

"We are building materials for our agents, operatives and investigators there. Mindanao is usually the target of terrorism like in Davao, General Santos City, Cotabato City and Zamboanga so we have to bring our force there. This is a serious matter," he said.

"We have to read the minds of all terrorists groups in neutralize them," Diaz added.

The seminars, he pointed out, were aimed at ensuring that NBI operatives and investigators, especially those assigned in Mindanao, were knowledgeable on bombings, explosives and mines.

"In the near future, we will also hold seminars all over the Philippines to make sure we can cope. But for the meantime, our focus is in Mindanao and Metro Manila," Diaz said.

Apart from the seminars, the NBI has put up a bomb and improvised explosive device (IED) detection unit to allow its men to familiarize themselves with the bomb signatures of different terrorist groups from other countries.

Diaz said that next month, the Philippines intends to join Malaysia and Indonesia in a tri-border police and prosecutor international program initiated by the National Bureau of Investigation as part of the global war against terrorism.

"Law enforcement agencies all over the world continue to maximize efforts to fight terrorism. This is a global war against terrorism and Philippine enforcement agencies are very much involved in efforts to counter terrorism," he said.

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID/REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply, Delivery, Installation and Other Related Services of the following:

Project	Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract (Source of Fund: DBP Fund)	Date of Bid Documents
Modular Furniture System for Various Offices at the DBP Head Office Building	1 lot	P20,130,000.00	P10,000.00
Servers – Horizontal application systems – Vertical/Blade application systems	7 units 19 units	P2,100,000.00 P12,600,000.00	P1,000.00 P1,000.00
Armored vehicle	3 units	P9,000,000.00	P5,000.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Opening
Expected Date of Delivery:
- 120 calendar days upon receipt of Purchase Order (for Modular Furniture)
- 30 calendar days upon receipt of Purchase Order (for Servers)
- 90 calendar days upon receipt of Purchase Order (for Armored Vehicle)

Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Pre-Bidding Conference	November 3, 2009 (Tuesday) at 9:30 a.m.	Wellfore DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	On or before 9:00 a.m. of November 18, 2009 (Monday)	BAC Secretariat, 3rd Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	November 18, 2009 (Monday) at 9:30 a.m.	Wellfore DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the RA-9184 or R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines and is not/have been authorized to engage in the supply, delivery and installation of the aforesaid modular furniture/servers/armored vehicle by virtue of their respective permits. Only bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall undergo the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedures.

Interested parties may download these forms at www.devbankphil.com.ph and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. Prospective bidders may secure the bid documents and Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 5th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee depending on the total amount of the approved budget of the contract in accordance with the prescribed fee schedule below, to wit:

The prospective bidders are advised to check the Bank's website and/or the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) for bid bulletin and announcements regarding the project.

The Bank of reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8-230-7200 local 2612.

Bids and Awards Committee

Rodriguez mayor protests new suspension order

By DJ Yap

EMBATTLED RODRIGUEZ MAYOR Pedro Cuenco led hundreds of his supporters in a protest motorcade at the courthouse in Quezon City to denounce the latest suspension order imposed on him, which came on the heels of a previous 60-day preventive suspension that lapsed on Friday.

"This is the worst form of job-killing which I can imagine. I cannot work and I cannot perform my functions as mayor. How will I protect the interests of my constituents if I cannot even be in my office and would remain only as powerful and legal enough to remain in his post," he added.

Cuenco told his supporters that he would not force his way into his office and would remain only as powerful and legal enough to remain in his post.

On Friday, he filed an appeal with the Office of the President requesting that his suspension be reversed.

The suspension order was based on an old administrative case filed last year against Cuenco for the construction of the Office of Transportation and Central Transport Terminal Project in barangay San Rafael.

Complainants Emilio Rabanal, Rizalina Arroyo and John Earl Ong had accused Cuenco of "grave neglect of duty, dereliction of duty, misconduct in office, unlawful behavior, and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service" for pushing through with the project supposedly without the required environmental permits.

Cuenco's actions allegedly resulted in the death of a bulldozer operator, as well as disaster which struck several children in the area due to dust and similar coming from the construction site.

Cuenco, the provincial board of Rizal said it decided to penalize Cuenco with a one-month suspension based on the Local Government Code provision concerning erratic officials charged with administrative cases.

Cuenco's previous suspension which lapsed on Friday involved a grab case filed against him and two other officials. The three were charged with grave abuse of authority and grave misconduct he alleged by ordering the demolition of 95 houses in Barangay Burgos in 2002.

Smoking... From page A1-B

Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Union and PAFP—promoted the new data presented by the department to prod it to press for the campaign for the implementation of a smoke-free policy in all public places.

"The new evidence linking secondhand smoke to heart attacks makes it even more clear than before, no one is harming people who do not smoke," said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III during a press conference.

"We also know that our non-smoking friends by eliminating exposure among innocent mothers, fathers, children, neighbors and colleagues," he added.

"Tobacco is killing a devastating toll on the Philippines and people are losing every day, because of tobacco's use tobacco. The way to reverse this epidemic is through proven policies such as creating 100 percent smoke-free public places and work places," said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

MetroBriefs

Teen jumps from building

A 15-YEAR-OLD allegedly jumped to his death from the 25th floor of a condominium in Pasay City yesterday morning although the police said they were not yet prepared to rule it a suicide. Cops identified the victim as Jonathan Gabriel Jr. of Phinaland Mills Subdivision, Bagong Ilog, Pasig City. He died at 9:10 a.m. in the police said. Senior Insp. Napoleon Villegas, Pasay police chief, said Gabriel's mother was found unconscious at the 25th floor of the condominium where she had been with her friends identified as Norman Albert Lucero and Kevin Jacob Catalano at the pool section of the 28th floor when he allegedly jumped off the building. Lucero and his friend could not explain to Medical City that he was pronounced dead on arrival, a report by PO2 Adrian Dela Cruz of the Police Station Operations led by Chief Insp. Dave Estrera processed the scene. "Based on the statements as records, it seems he did jump. There didn't seem to be any sign of foul play since he did not have any other external injuries like bruises or wounds," Villegas said. But he said the police were not yet prepared to make any conclusions pending the official report from the SOCO team. DJ Yap

Newly freed prisoner stabbed dead

A FORMER prisoner who was having a drinking spree with friends to celebrate his release was stabbed to death by assailants on Sunday night in Barangay Sauyo in Novaliches, Quezon City. Ariel Malabuyo, 22, was released early last month from the Quezon City Jail. Case investigator PO3 Lorelei Tapia said he ex-prisoner was convicted of physical injuries charges. "We're thinking that his former inmates in jail may have been also released and decided to get back at him," Tapia said. Julie M. Aurelio

Disgraced S. Korea cloning scientist convicted

SEOUL—A SOUTH KOREAN court on Monday found disgraced stem cell scientist Hwang Woo-suk guilty of fraud and handed down a suspended sentence in a case that sent shock waves throughout the global scientific community.

Hwang, once a scientific rock star for his struggle to bring South Korea to the forefront of stem cell studies, had faced trial on charges of fraud, misusing state funds and violating bioethics laws.

"He was guilty of fabrication," the Seoul court said in a verdict in the trial that involved more than three years and included painstaking details about the scientific work Hwang said his team had performed at Seoul National University.

HWANG

The court also said that Hwang illegally diverted a portion of the money he received for research for his personal use.

"But he has shown his has truly repented for his crimes," the court said in its verdict. Hwang's supporters, who have packed the court for each hearing, broke into applause when the court sentenced Hwang to two years in jail, suspended for three years.

Prosecutors were seeking a four-year prison term, saying Hwang had set back scientific research and despite earlier praised the country, which was at one point being presented with a global center for stem cell studies.

Hwang and his lawyers did not speak to reporters.

Hwang's team was thought to have made two major breakthroughs by cloning stem cells and tailoring them to a specific patient, which raised hopes of presenting genetically specific donor organ repair damaged organs or treat diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Stem cells are the body's master cells, giving rise to all the tissues, organs and blood. Embryonic stem cells are considered the most powerful kinds of stem cells, as they have the potential to give rise to any type of tissue.

An investigation team at Seoul National University ruled in late 2005 that Hwang's team fabricated vital data in two papers on human embryonic stem cells. Hwang resigned his posts and the government revoked his stem cell research license.

With major financial backing from his supporters, Hwang went on to found Sooam Biotech Research Foundation in 2006, which specializes in animal cloning and has produced cloned dogs.

Hwang is still regarded with awe by many in the country but has fostered a small, devoted group of followers.

"Perhaps there is a chance that he might regain trust from people through decent work. However, the truth has come out on his manipulated research and this has been made clear," said Park Jeong-woo, a professor of bioethics at Catholic University. Reuters

Twitter serves up ideas from its followers

SAN FRANCISCO—TWITTER started two years ago as a basic buzz service, offering little more than the ability to post 140-character messages. Then it surrounded its idea generators to see users. The company watches how people use the service and solicits ideas, which can. Then it suggests users the ideas into new features.

In the next several weeks, Twitter users will discover two new features, Lists and Retweets, that had been proposed beginners.

Technology companies know firms the most value by relying on others to innovate for them. This is in large part because the Internet lets people exchange ideas easily and rapidly with large groups, and compelling tools let people design new products cheaply.

Twitter, though, may rely on user-generated innovation more than any other company. Early on, Twitter users started referring to others by typing the @ symbol before their name. For example, Biz Stone, a Twitter founder, recently wrote about his wife "@Xtine, GO! Join just took her homemade vegan lasagna out of the oven—I'm hungry!"

"That use really took us by surprise," said Evan Williams, Twitter's chief executive and a founder. Most firms, Twitter has added a section to the site where people can see tweets that they are mentioned with the @ symbol. It began hyperlinking the names so others can click on them to see the subject's profile page.

Up next are two new features that users also inspired by users. One is called Lists, available to a small group now and to all Twitter users soon. People can create lists of all the tweets written by Hollywood celebrities or politicians, for example. Lists will help users more figure out whom to follow. Users now rely heavily on other their overflowing streams of posts, Williams said.

Also, when Twitter users wanted to send a post by using Twitter user to their own set of followers, they wrote "retweet," which they shortened to RT. Twitter is now patiently testing an official retweet button that will fix some of the problems with retweets by eliminating redundant posts, clarifying who wrote the original post and preventing people from changing other people's words, Williams said.

"You get a bunch of users interacting, and it's hard to predict what they're going to do," he said. "We say, 'Why are people using this, and how could we make that better?'" AFP

Iraq bombings spark international fury

BAGHDAD—IRAQI SECURITY forces were on high alert on Monday a day after twin car bombs which bombs throned on al-Qaida killed 155 people in Baghdad, provoking widespread international condemnation.

The near-simultaneous attacks targeting government offices in the country of the capital were the deadliest in the violence-wracked country in more than two years. More than 700 people were wounded.

US soldiers were called in to assist with the investigations into the bombings, as Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Maliki pledged that the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

One of the attackers exploded a truck bomb at a busy intersection near the justice and economy ministries, while the other detonated a car bomb in front of the nearby Baghdad provincial government offices.

Shortly after the attacks, Maliki claimed the role of the provincial government attack, where he spoke to officials and security officers.

"These cowardly terrorist attacks cannot and affect the determination of the Iraqi people to continue their struggle against the remnants of the dismantled regime and al-Qaeda terrorists," Maliki said in a later statement.

He said the attacks would not affect the political process or parliamentary elections, also in January, and promised to punish those behind the bombings.

US President Barack Obama

FATAL? Members of a victim who was killed in a suicide bombing grieve at his funeral in Baghdad on Dec. 14. AFP

led international condemnation of Monday's attacks and offered his condolences by telephone to both Maliki and President Jalal Talabani.

Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, condemned the "unprecedented" attacks, saying in a statement.

"On behalf of him, I strongly condemn the bombings that occurred today in Baghdad, which caused huge loss of innocent life."

The European Union's foreign policy chief Javier Solana also issued a statement, while France offered its "full solidarity" and Britain said the attacks had "no justification."

Iran joined the condemnation. "These terrorist actions aim to wreck stability and the process of reinforcing democratic structures," a foreign ministry official said.

Government spokesperson Ali al-Dabbagh and Maj. Gen. Qassim Atta, spokesperson for the Iraqi Army's Baghdad operations, both said 99 people had been killed in the attacks.

Atta added that the truck was carrying one ton of explosives and the two were packed with 700 kilograms of explosives.

The toll was the highest in a coordinated attack in Iraq since four truck bombings on Aug. 14, 2007, killed more than 400 people in two Kurdish villages.

Two months ago, the country's interior ministry was the second in the blasts, a US embassy spokesperson said in a statement. AFP

Pakistan claims more advances in offensive in Taliban stronghold

ISLAMABAD—THE PAKISTANI army has claimed advances in its offensive in a Taliban stronghold along the Afghan border, while the militants' chief warned of more terrorist attacks around the country unless the military halted the assault.

The army moved into South Waziristan some days ago vowing to crush a militant network it says is behind 80 percent of the suicide bombings that have rocked the country over the last three years.

Washington has encouraged the operation because militants there are believed to shelter al-Qaida leaders and attack Western troops in Afghanistan.

The military announced on Saturday its first major achievement, the capture of Kotkai, the hometown of Pakistani Taliban chief Hakimullah Mehsud and one of his top deputies, Qari Hussain. The Army said the town had hosted a training camp for suicide bombers.

The Taliban chief remained defiant on Sunday.

In a telephone call to an Associated Press reporter from an undisclosed location, Mehsud said, "We have not suffered any significant losses in Waziristan."

He threatened to turn Pakistan into "another Afghanistan or Iraq" unless the assault stopped.

Over the past three weeks, the Taliban have carried out a string of bombings — commando-style raids across the country in response to the air and ground offensive. About 200 people have been killed in the onslaught.

In the latest attack on Sunday, a suicide bomber blew up a car packed with explosives after it was stopped by police on a highway near Bannu city, about 190 kilometers south of Islamabad, killing seven others. Police allege militants were planning to detonate the bomb in Lahore.

In South Waziristan, the Army said troops had engaged two key militant leaders Kotkai and the key militant base of Sararogha, the Army statement said troops secured at least one other important front and fought 16 hours to capture a significant mountaintop.

The militants have fled Kotkai and are sporadically attacking troops with rockets from high ground, the military said.

The Army has deployed some 30,000 troops to the inland region to take on an estimated 12,000 militants, including up to 1,500 foreign fighters, among them Uzbeks and Arabs. AP

Webber diagnosed with cancer

LONDON—COMPOSER Andrew Lloyd Webber has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, his spokesperson said on Sunday.

The 61-year-old Lloyd Webber's condition is on an early stage, a statement from his publicists said.

"Andrew is now undergoing treatment and expects to be fully back at work before the end of the year," the statement said.

Lloyd Webber recently announced plans for a sequel to his phenomenally successful musical "Phantom of the Opera." Called "Love Never Dies," it is scheduled to open in London in March and follow on Broadway in November. Rehearsals begin in the new year.

At a media event for the new musical earlier this month, Lloyd Webber said that while the story picks up where "Phantom" left off, he doesn't regard it as a sequel — "It's a standalone piece."

But Lloyd Webber said he was inspired to write the musical because "there's unfinished business."

ANGRIEN Lloyd Webber

In "Love Never Dies," the Phantom leaves Paris for Coney Island at the turn of the century, which Lloyd Webber said was the Las Vegas "and then triple it."

Producers say the original "Phantom"—a fixture of the West End and Broadway — Tony singers—has been seen by more than 100 million people around the world. In September, it became the longest-running show in Broadway history, toppling uncle Lloyd Webber's "Cats."

Lloyd Webber's other musical hits have included "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," "Jesus Christ Superstar," and "Evita." He was awarded Baronet in London's famous Privy Seal.

According to his website, Lloyd Webber has won Tony Awards, three Grammy Awards, a Golden Globe and an Oscar. In 2006, he was awarded the Kennedy Center Honors.

Lloyd Webber was knighted in 1992 and married to Britain's Princess Margaret in 1997. AP

No way Jose, er, Joe: Hotel owner tells Hispanic workers to change names

WHITTEN at the front of his hotel in Taos, New Mexico

TAOS, NEW MEXICO—LARRY WHITTEN marched into this northern New Mexico town in late July on a mission. He wanted a failing hotel.

The tough-talking former Marine immediately laid down some rules. Among them, he forbade the Hispanic workers at the run-down, 60-unit Sierra adobe-style hotel from speaking Spanish in his presence. He thought they'd be talking about him, and ordered some in Anglicize their names.

He chose Martin (Malo-TEEN). It was plain-old Martin, he says. Moreno, Jose it sounded like Mark.

Whitten's management style had worked for him in his second-storied cities distressed hotels he bought in rural towns across the country.

His rules and his firing of several Hispanic employees angered his employees and many in this liberal enclave of 5,000 residents at the base of the Sangre de Cristo mountains, where a strong sense of multiculturalism can find a home and where Spanish language, culture and traditions have strong and treasured history.

"I came into this tradition of staying Spanish versus Americans. Everyone has their various everybody up here. He just doing what I've always done," he says.

Former employees, their relatives and some town residents picketed on and the street from the hotel.

"I do feel he's a racist, but he's a racist out of ignorance. He doesn't know that what he's doing is wrong," says protester Juanito Bones Jr., who identified himself as prime minister of an activist group called Los Barrios Unidos de Nuevo Mexico.

The Virginia-born Whitten had spent 40 years in the hotel business, turning around more than 20 hotels in Texas, Oklahoma, Florida and South Carolina, before moving with his wife to Taos from Abilene, Texas. He had visited Taos before, and liked its beauty. When Whitten saw that the Sangre Inn was up for sale, he jumped at it.

The community includes Taos Pueblo, an American Indian dwelling inhabited for over 1,000 years, and an adobe Catholic church made famous in a Georgia O'Keeffe painting.

After he arrived, Whitten met with the employees. He says he immediately noticed that they were hostile to his management style and worried they might start telling about him in Spanish.

"Because of that, I asked the people in my presence to speak only English, because I do not understand Spanish," Whitten says. "I've been working in Texas and we have a lot of Spanish people there. I've never had to ask anyone to speak only English in front of me because I've never had a reason to."

Some employees were fired, Whitten says, because they were hostile and insubordinate. He says they were unwilling "to relate (to) need."

Paul Bond manager Kathy Archuleta says the workers mutually tried to adjust to his style. "We had to create gone through four or five owners before him, so we knew what to expect," Archuleta says. "I told (the workers) we needed to give him a chance." AP

The WORLD

Lito Lorente B. Gosco

GETTING READY FOR HALLOWEEN A girl selects pumpkins at a road farm in Calverton, Maryland, one week before Halloween. AP

Iran will need 18 months for A-bomb, say envoys

UNITED NATIONS—INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES estimate that it would probably take Iran a minimum of 18 months to develop a nuclear weapon if it chose to build one, Western diplomats and intelligence officials said.

Six years the US General Intelligence Agency, Britain's MI6, Israel's Mossad, their French and German counterparts and other spy agencies have been struggling to pinpoint Iran's secretive nuclear program, often disagreeing internally and with each other on when Iran could have a nuclear weapon.

Tehran insists that its nuclear program is peaceful and says Western spies are lying when they suggest Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons. Some officials at the US nuclear watchdog in Vienna have warned against exaggerating the case against Iran, as happened with pre-war Iraq.

But several Western diplomats said that the top spy agencies generally agreed that Tehran would need at least 18 months to build an atomic weapon if it decided to make one—a much shorter timeline than some of the agencies' publicly released assessments of Iran's nuclear plans.

"It's not a formal assessment or formal agreement but a rough agreement that we can all work with," said one Western diplomat said on condition of anonymity. He said it was a "worst-case scenario," not the most likely one.

Another Western diplomat confirmed the agreement, adding that the assessment was based on the assumption that Tehran would need at least six months to purify its uranium stocks to weapons-grade level and another 12 months for "weaponization"—building the actual nuclear weapon.

The assessment possibly underlies increased hesitancy given no indication of how much time the six countries spearheading efforts to persuade Iran to halt its enrichment program—the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China—have before Tehran could theoretically have an atomic weapon.

Iran has so far rejected offers of economic and political incentives from the six in exchange for suspending enrichment, despite getting 38 with three months of UN sanctions.

A plan under discussion in Vienna that would move most of Iran's low enriched uranium stocks to Russia and France for reenrichment and fabrication into fuel rods would add another 12 months onto the timeline if Tehran accepts it, the diplomat said. Tehran's needs is specialized fuel assembly for a medical reactor but is reluctant to send its uranium abroad.

The diplomats also pointed out that the 18-month estimate did not account for technical obstacles and hurdles that could be expected to slow down the process of building an actual weapon. Nor does it assume Tehran has already made a strategic decision to build such a weapon.

US Director of National Intelligence said in February that Iran would not realistically be able to get a nuclear weapon until 2013. Mossad Chief Meir Dagan was more cautious, saying recently that it would take the Iranians until 2014.

But an Israeli official linked to the country's security Cabinet described the 18-month timeline as "reasonable."

A recently retired Israeli government intelligence analyst who still has access to briefings also said the reasoning was solid. "Iran can argue about the timeline—a few months here or there—but that's not relevant to the big picture." Reuters

Trial slated: Before Madoff, there was Petters

MINNEAPOLIS—UNTIL THE Bernard Madoff scandal broke, it was a Minnesota businessman who stood accused of orchestrating the largest Ponzi scheme (scheme) could ever recall.

Tom Petters, 52, who seemed to have a golden touch as he built a small merchandise liquidation company into a diversified empire that owned well-known businesses such as Polaroid, goes on trial this week. The size of his alleged fraud: $3.65 billion.

Petters' world began to unravel a year ago when his trusted lieutenant, Deanna Coleman, walked into the US attorney's office with what prosecutors called a "staggering" allegation.

Coleman said that for more than 15 years she had helped Petters run a multibillion-dollar Ponzi scheme. She said they fabricated documents to trick investors into loaning money that Petters would claim to use to buy TVs and other electronic goods that he would purport to resell to big retailers like Costco and Sam's Club. Those goods never existed, prosecutors claim, saying most of the money really went to finance Petters' lifestyle and to pay off other investors.

Petters is charged with 20 counts, including wire fraud, mail fraud, money laundering and conspiracy, which could impose him for life. He maintains his innocence, and remains jailed. The trial is expected to take about six weeks, with jury selection starting on Wednesday.

Coleman and six other alleged conspirators reached plea agreements, and most have expressed with investigators.

Petters pleaded not guilty on Dec. 2, just a week before Madoff began confessing. The New York Financier (named his investors to be more than $65 billion last November, but authorities say his scheme may documents of investors at least $13 billion. Madoff pleaded guilty and is serving a 150-year sentence.

Madoff is a major reason that Petters' lawyers have had a tough attention, said defense lawyers, who aren't involved in either case. The prominent local attorney, Earl Gray jokingly called him "a petty offender" compared with Madoff.

Mr. Doug Kelley, a former federal prosecutor appointed by the court to try to recover money for Petters' alleged victims, said the Madoff receivers have told him they view the Petters case as "infinitely more complicated" because Madoff kept accurate records, while Petters built a complex web of "sham companies" to create an "in curious stages of deception."

Petters once owned luxury homes in Minnesota, Florida and Colorado, yachts and jets cars. He befriended with pro athletes and Hollywood stars and bestowed more than $10 million at one casino. He also styled himself as a philanthropist (he) to higher education, pledging millions to at least four colleges, which in turn named programs and endowed chairs after him, his children and company.

He failed to deliver on most of the money he promised. AP

TWO JEWISH women wait for the elevator at the Mamilla mall just outside Jerusalem's Old City. AP

Sorry if you're on the 7th floor: Rabbinical ruling outlaws use of elevator

JERUSALEM—THE JEWISH day of rest has become a lot more labor-intensive for Yosef Ball.

The Orthodox Jew and his wife are no longer using elevators custom-built for the Jewish Sabbath, over since a rabbinical ruling last month outlawed them. Instead, they have been hiking up seven flights of stairs to get home each Saturday, lugging with them their four young children and a double stroller.

"It's been very hard, but we're walking up the stairs slowly and with a lot of patience," said Ball, 28, pushing a baby carriage with two toddlers in one on a recent day.

Jewish law forbids labor on the Sabbath. But for decades rabbis have allowed special elevators that automatically stop at every floor without the riders pushing any buttons, preventing Orthodox Jews to ride them and live in high-rise buildings.

The ruling last month by one of Israel's leading rabbis, ending the elevators a no-go, has reignited a vigorous debate over the lifts, leaving Orthodox Jews living on top floors to decide if they're up for the steep hike home from synagogue on Saturdays.

The Orthodox community has long been divided over the elevators. Opponents say that the riders push on buttons, the weight of the passengers will trigger the engagement of electricity required to power the lift, thus violating Jewish law.

Still, the elevators, in use for some four decades, have spurred the door for large numbers of Orthodox Jews to dwell in modern skyscrapers.

"So young couple is going to move into a ninth or tenth floor building if it becomes a place for them," said Menachem Rosenblum, an ultra-Orthodox commentator in Jerusalem.

Lila Lowell, a Bronx native now living in Jerusalem, installed a Sabbath elevator in access her second-floor apartment and won't stop using it despite the decree.

"My elevator is kosher," she said. And she added: "My husband and I have difficulty with the stairs, so we need the elevator." Her young grandchildren also use the lift.

The ruling, decreed last month, is the latest in a series by Israeli rabbis on the minutiae of applying Jewish law to daily life. Top rabbis can exert tens of thousands of followers who abide by their religious rulings.

Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, the revered 99-year-old scholar who signed the elevator ruling, has been behind other controversial decisions before. In September, he proclaimed Jews could not wear Crocs shoes or Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, because they were deemed too comfortable for the somber fasting holiday.

In 2006, Elyashiv prohibited religious women from wearing fashion-trendy wigs because the hair may have been used in idol-worshiping ceremonies, which are forbidden under Jewish law. Religious women cover their heads with wigs or cloth as a sign of modesty. AP

German trial over stabbing of Muslim woman

BERLIN—THE TRIAL OF a MAN ACCUSED of stabbing a pregnant Egyptian woman to death in a German court—at attack that outraged Muslims—opens on Monday in the same courthouse, but under much greater security.

About 200 police officers will secure the Dresden state court, and bulletproof glass has been installed in the courtroom where the alleged assailant, identified only as Alexander W., goes on trial accused of murder, attempted murder and dangerous bodily harm.

Marwa al-Sherbini, 31, was giving evidence in July against a man charged with defamation for having called her a "terrorist" and "Islamist" when he attacked her. The young woman died after being stabbed 18 times. Her husband was also stabbed.

Members of Al-Sherbini's family including her husband, Elwy Ali Okaz, will act as co-plaintiffs in the trial, as is allowed under German law—allowing them to review evidence, file motions and question witnesses.

On Sunday, Egypt's president of the Lawyers' Syndicate, Hamdi Ahmed Khalifa, left for Germany to join the Al-Sherbini family lawyers.

He told reporters that the defense team will "concentrate on refuting some of the German media's claims that the killer is mentally ill. We will demand the severest punishment for him."

The defendant Alexander W. is a jobless 28-year-old German citizen who was born in Russia and emigrated to Sweden a decade ago.

The July 1 killing of pharmacist Al-Sherbini triggered protests in Egypt and Turkey, in large part due to what Muslims regarded as a lack of concern regarding the incident in Germany and the rest of the Western world.

A MAN holds a flower during a memorial service in Dresden on July 11 for Al-Sherbini, who was stabbed 18 times in a courtroom. AFP

Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed her condolences to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the sidelines of the Group of Eight summit in Italy this summer, but German officials generally appeared determined to avoid the killing. That was widely interpreted in the Muslim world as evidence of Islamophobia in Germany.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad highlighted as evidence of Western double-standards the contrast between an apparent lack of interest in the story and intense interest in the death of a young Iranian woman during antigovernment protests in Tehran.

Before the trial, Merkel's adviser for immigrant affairs spoke on Friday with Egypt's ambassador in Germany. Hani Sheshtawi's office said the two agreed to stay in touch, given the tremendous interest in the trial "in both countries, as well as in the whole Arab world." AP

Madoff associate Picower found dead, police say

MIAMI—FLORIDA INVESTOR AND FISH banker Jeffry Picower, accused of stealing billions of dollars in his friend Bernard Madoff's Ponzi scheme, died on Sunday after he was found at the bottom of his swimming pool, police said.

Picower's wife discovered her husband at the bottom of the pool in their Palm Beach mansion and called police. Picower, 67, was rushed to hospital where he was pronounced dead.

"The standard operating procedure in any drowning, the Palm Beach Police Department is conducting an investigation into Mr. Picower's death," police said in a statement.

Detectives remained on the scene hours after the death, they added.

The court-appointed trustee working down Madoff's financial billions has sued Picower to recoup part of the $6.7 billion he and his associates were said to have withdrawn from the scheme orchestrated by Madoff, whose court papers said was a friend and associate of Picower for more than 20 years.

"The trustee's investigation to date has revealed that at least five billion dollars of the customer net withdrawals from the Ponzi scheme," according to the documents filed in May to the US bankruptcy court in Manhattan.

Picower, a former lawyer and accountant who reportedly once came under scrutiny by the Internal Revenue Service for his work with suspicious tax shelters, was accused of knowingly profiting from the Madoff fraud which brought "implausibly high rates of return," according to the filings.

Picower's annual return rates often topped 300 percent, with one account in 1999 yielding a return of 890 percent, the documents said. AFP

Atty. Raul O. Marcelo • Associate Editor Carrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

Manufacturing output continues to slide

Value down 15.2% as volume dipped 13.3% in Aug.

By Nonoel W. Domingo

THE YEARLY DECLINE IN THE VALUE AND VOLUME of manufacturing output slowed down in August but was still in double-digit at 15.2 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively, according to the National Statistics Office.

The continued contraction was attributed to falling production values in 13 of 20 major industries and falling volumes in eight other industries covered in the NSO's monthly integrated survey of selected industries (Misi).

NSO documents showed that the yearly change in manufacturing output value and volume had been negative in the 10 months from November 2008.

With 2000 figures made as benchmark at 100 points, the Misi index were down in August to 131 point in value and 74.4 points in volume.

Compared to July output, the change in value remained positive although slower at 0.4 percent while the change in volume swung to the negative at -1.1 percent.

On a yearly basis, the biggest reductions in output value was still seen in petroleum products at 53.3 percent.

Double-digit reductions in value were also observed in furniture and fixtures (39.2 percent), leather products (34.3 percent), beverages (23.2 percent), basic metals (23.7 percent), electrical machinery (21.3 percent), footwear and wearing apparel (16.7 percent), paper and paper products (15.9 percent), and wood and wood products (10.7 percent).

Four other industries suffered single-digit declines, including transport equipment, non-electrical machinery, rubber and plastic products, and miscellaneous manufactured items.

The biggest gainer year-on-year were non-metallic products, which went up 20.5 percent, while chemicals, food manufacturing, publishing and printing, textiles, tobacco and fabricated metal products posted positive growth rates.

On a monthly basis, eight sectors showed improved output value, led non-metallic products, which grew at 11.1 percent.

Fourteen major sectors drove the reductions in output volume, with petroleum, beverages, footwear and wearing apparel, wood and wood products, and leather products falling by at least a quarter of year-ago levels.

Double-digit decreases were also observed in electrical machinery, non-electrical machinery, and furniture and fixtures.

Basic metals, transport equipment, chemicals, paper and paper products, textiles, and rubber and plastic products decreased at single-digit rates.

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Lopezes selling only half of Meralco stake

By Zoey B. Baron

THE LOPEZES EXPECT TO complete by next month the sale of at least half of its remaining 13.4 percent stake in Manila Electric Co. to the First Pacific group, according to the family patriarch.

At the sidelines of a turnover ceremony at the Energy Development Corp. office, Oscar Lopez, chair of First Philippine Holdings Corp., said they expected to finish ongoing negotiations with businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan hopefully by November.

According to Lopez, the family was willing only half of its remaining stake in the power distribution utility "so we can make the better prices because" As for the other half, the family patriarch disclosed that they plan to hold on it for a while and sell "probably two or three years from now."

After selling a 20-percent stake to the PLDT group earlier this year, the Lopezes still own a crucial minority block of 13.4 percent through unit First Philippine Holdings Corp. and Benpres Holdings Corp.

The First Pacific group, which owns 24.7 percent of Meralco through PLDT and Metro Pacific Investments Corp., has the right of first refusal on the remaining Meralco block.

Lopez told reporters that even if they sell half of the remaining stake, the right would remain in effect until the whole stake is sold. "I think they will still keep to those... for some time," Lopez added.

Pangilinan earlier said he was interested in acquiring the other 13.4 percent block and not just a portion of it as initially speculated by the stock market.

Japanese firm buys 34% stake of BDO in Mabuhay Vinyl

By Doris C. Dumlao

TYCOON HENRY SY'S BANCO de Oro Unibank Inc. is selling its 34-percent stake in Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. to Tosoh Corp. of Japan, allowing the multinational company to take over majority control of the local chemical manufacturer.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, BDO said it agreed to unload 234.5 million shares in the company at P1 each.

Shares of Mabuhay Vinyl surged 58 percent to P6.50, letting the maximum daily price increase allowed in the local bourse, as investors bid up the shares in anticipation of a tender offer by Tosoh at the same price with BDO. Tosoh issued a notice yesterday announcing that it would extend offer to buy out other stockholders of Mabuhay Vinyl.

BDO, the country's biggest bank in terms, agreed to sell its shares as it could focus on its core banking businesses.

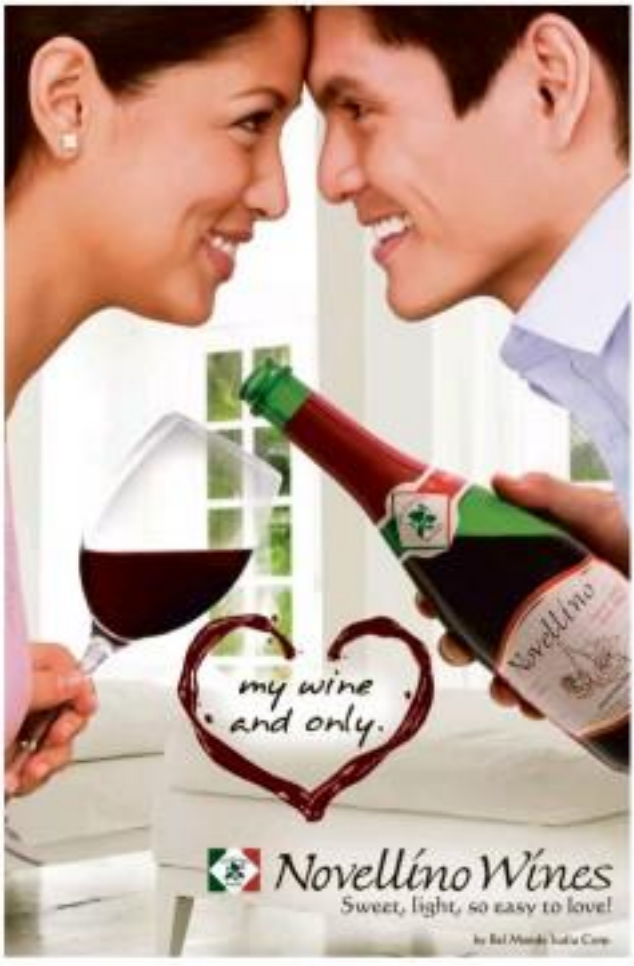
"We are an accidental owner of [Mabuhay Vinyl] as part of a loan settlement. While the business is sound, it has always been our strategy to focus on our core business," BDO president Nestor Tan explained yesterday.

Once the buyout is completed, Tosoh will raise its stake in Mabuhay Vinyl to 67.7 percent.

Other minority shareholders with the option to accept Tosoh's tender offer are Metro Alliance Holdings & Equities Corp. (13.9 percent), Anjo Realty Corp. (3.85 percent) and Mitsubishi Corp. (3.7 percent).

Tosoh is a global supplier of inorganic chemicals, petrochemicals, and specialty materials supporting the semiconductor, pharmaceutical, healthcare and food, and many other industries. The group comprises 136 companies globally and more than 30 of these firms are located outside Japan. It employs more

JAPANESE SO



INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

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STOCK MARKET

Stocks up on Asian rebound

Benguet unit to undertake nickel-mining operations

By Amy R. Remo

BENGUET CORP. YESTERDAY SAID it has signed an agreement with its wholly owned subsidiary Benguet Corp. Nickel Mines Inc. (BNiM), allowing the latter to undertake the activities on its nickel project in Zambales.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Benguet assistant corporate secretary Reynaldo D. Mendoza said that the move was in line with the company's plans to create business units to implement various mining projects, as previously disclosed during its stockholders' meeting last year.

According to Mendoza, the mining property in Zambales has an approved Mineral Production Sharing Agreement with a completed exploration and predevelopment work program at a total invested cost of P117 million.

Aside from the existing coal deposit near Olongapore, Benguet said BNiM could also be tasked to undertake research and feasibility study on various processing technologies such as pelletizing or vat leach processing, Mendoza said.

Benguet earlier said that it had already incorporated a project company to raise funds for its nickel mining project through public listing and stocks offering, with First Metro Investment Corp. as the financial adviser of Benguet Corp.

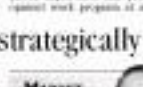
Zambales property ready for development

Not yet strategically significant

WALL STREET INVESTORS APPEAR to be bounded by skepticism over encouraging earnings reports that have started coming in.

Wall Street bosses even shunned other market investors on the claim that the US equity market was around overbalancing as it broke through the 10,000 psychological level of the Dow Jones Industrial Index, following reports that earnings of many companies had topped expectations. This unnerved to some profit taking that again sent the Dow Jones Industrial lower by Friday.

Notwithstanding the power the world's biggest market has here on our own, our market may take a slightly different trek. It may stay bullish as it did last week, with investors continuing to be more gung-ho on second-liners' issues.



MARKET RIDER

Dave Ismolovich

This would be radically different from how the market appeared as to a little over a week ago when it resumed its forthcoming reversal (down a trilion?) point. Last week's closing performance surprised us here (ranged all this, bringing a more refreshing picture).

The market's index rose on Friday after a two-day correction that saw stock prices below the 2,900 psychological level of the major composite index, respectively recovering.

Looking more closely at the charts, however, the effort is only worth something to those as for the moment. Market momentum remains weak and the bearish divergence of the market hasn't materially changed.

This means that while some of our stock favorites may have broken through resistance levels, the market trend on the whole has not yet turned into something unambiguously significant.

Week 20 of the virtual game

By this week, the composition of the 30-stock Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) will be revised for the second time this year. If you have missed the news, DMCI Holdings Inc. (DMCI), Security Bank Corp. (SECB) and the diversified Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) will replace Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc. (VLL), Bloomberry Resorts Corp. (BLOOM), Security Bank Corp. (SECB) and ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. (ABS).

The changes will take effect on Nov. 2.

This will be the first time the PSE itself will be included in the index.

It will join other exchanges such as the Singapore Exchange, Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Ltd. and Australian Securities Exchange to be included in the composite indices in their respective markets.

In the virtual game, the final day of the contest is now less than seven weeks away. To be, only four of the market rulers have actively employed their original virtual capital in the game. The other three are yet to unleash their cash to carry more. As of the end of week 20, they are holding on to about 40 to 60 percent of their virtual capital.

It appears that these players are holding on to their cash as part of their money management strategy, which to me appears more to be a strategy for risk management.

While traders confuse risk management with money management. Risk management is more of preserving capital from losses, like taking small losses and managing the rewards as they relate to risks taken.

Money management refers to the proper amount of capital need to attain investment returns. In order not to appear to walk the fine line, money management to overcome other position sizing (we'll give this subject some further study sometime).

The table below presents statistical details on the latest month of the virtual game:

Bottom line spin

While the adjustment of the PSEi to its new composition, we may see more action coming along this November.

Investors with the volume and amount of value turnover of the market remaining the same, the occurrence of the market may still remain in the 2,900 psychological level of the PSEi. In this case, a "finding-bell" on any price uptick among stocks that are at their recent bought levels should be more prevalent.

As I've said earlier, the market's comment on line to go higher to become more negative the upside out.

(You may reach the Market Rider at: market.rider@inquirer.com.ph or abused to dave.ismolovich@yahoo.com.)

Japanese firm buys 34%...

From page B1

share 11,000 people and generates net sales of approximately $7.4 billion.

Mabuhay Vinyl, which has a standard capitalization of P420 million based on yesterday's closing price, has 264 percent of its shares held by the public.

The company was previously led by the family of "plastics" king Wilhelm Cockburn.

The company had total assets of P1.81 billion as of end-June, based on its latest financial results, which also showed a net loss after tax of P42 million in the first six months as against P48.86 million a year ago.

Disclosures

PEPSI-COLA PRODUCTS PHILIPPINES, Inc/Oct. 19 elected/effectively as directors/of company: Alfredo Yao, Gerald D. Soosay, James Ong Ji, Tracy Cho Tze Ji/Ann Tsung-Ann L. Ignacio, Timothy L. Ebright, Cesario Cano, Jose M. Pacqued Jr. and Orlando M. Ibrado Board/Sept 9. Hours as independent directors.

* * *

CSB DEVELOPER INC. (SCL) (10.27) its investors' and analysts' briefing regarding its 2nd Qua ter 2009 financial results on Nov. 3, 4 Pre 17th floor of the SSS Makati Medical Center. Registration starts at 11 noon and the presentation proper will start after lunch.

* * *

FIRST NEW CORP. (WAL, 0.02) (3) special stockholders' meeting on Nov. 20 at Sea is at the Palm Drive, Boulevard, Dak. 2/Alexandra Drive Boulevard, Center 6 Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Oct. 30 will be entitled to notice of and vote at the meeting. *Compiled by Angel Quintan, Jeanne Bangcaya*

Philippine Stock Exchange

Currencies

Dollar	Euro	Pound	Yen
Australia	1.1050.46	1.7150	0.7 1.01
Brazil	1.7077.00	2.6477.0000	0.0157
Canada	1.0670.00	1.6553.00	0.9313
Hong Kong	7.7500.00	12.0250.00	0.1290
Indonesia	9.4000.00	14.5900.00	49.0000
Japan	89.0000	138.0950	44.7000
Malaysia	3.3150	5.1450.00	13.7500
Singapore	1.4000.00	2.1720.00	31.5000
Taiwan	32.7000.00	50.7350.00	2.7400
Thailand	33.9000.00	52.6000.00	2.6300
Vietnam	17.9000.00	27.7650.00	5.0000
Euro	0.6450.00	1.0000.00	1.5500
Japan	0.6450.00	1.0000.00	1.5500
Korea	1.1000.00	1.7050.00	0.9000
Taiwan	32.7000.00	50.7350.00	2.7400
Thailand	33.9000.00	52.6000.00	2.6300
Vietnam	17.9000.00	27.7650.00	5.0000
Euro	0.6450.00	1.0000.00	1.5500
Japan	0.6450.00	1.0000.00	1.5500
Korea	1.1000.00	1.7050.00	0.9000
Taiwan	32.7000.00	50.7350.00	2.7400
Thailand	33.9000.00	52.6000.00	2.6300
Vietnam	17.9000.00	27.7650.00	5.0000

RP tourism competitiveness slips five notches

By Abigail L. Hu

THE PHILIPPINES SHOULD STEP UP ITS travel and tourism related facilities as well as create a single, recognizable global brand if it wants to regain its footing and climb up the global tourism competitiveness ladder.

In a presentation before industry stakeholders yesterday, Uwe Stuchtmann, private sector promotion project manager for German cooperation agency GTZ, said the country had to do something to arrest the drop in its ranking in the World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report.

The country last year occupied the 41st spot among the more than 130 countries included in the study. This year, the country fell five notches to No. 46.

"The Philippines has to improve the quality of its tourism. People who come to the Philippines also visit other countries, and their tendency is to compare. They often say hotels and resorts in the Philippines are relatively more expensive, but the facilities are not that good," he related.

"There has to be quality standards in place to force [hotel and resort owners] to upgrade their facilities. Whatever star rating they have should match the quality of their facilities. There really should be stricter standards," he added.

Instead of making local government units and government agencies, such as the Department of Tourism, with maneuvering locals and tourists nationwide, he proposed the commissioning of a third-party assessor that would ensure that strict standards would be followed.

"People who offer poor or mediocre service shouldn't be allowed to get away with it," he said.

Apart from implementing stricter standards, he said the country should step up its marketing efforts to communicate to the world what the Philippines has to offer.

"The Philippines needs a single corporate identity, a consistent brand that will be recognized worldwide, like Malaysia's 'Truly Asia' campaign. I know Malaysia poured a lot of money into it but and the DOT doesn't have that big a budget. For this, the government can tap the private sector for funds. A 1-2 percent increase [in tourism arrivals] can also help," he said.

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T-bill yield down 4.8 bps to 3.85%

By Reena V. Domingo

THE YIELD ON THE BENCHMARK 91-DAY Treasury bill decreased by 4.8 basis points to an average of 3.849 percent as investors go for shorter-term debt papers amid market uncertainties.

On the other hand, interest on the 182-day bills increased by 0.6 basis point while that for the 364-day issue decreased by 3.8 basis points.

National Treasurer Roberto S. Tan said yesterday's rates were "almost the same as (the) first done deals" that were pegged at 4.4 percent.

"We just followed the market," Tan said, describing the changes as "sideways."

He said there was some uncertainty on whether policy rates in the United States, which affect those in the Philippines, would increase soon.

"The theoretical market is also uncertain on the fiscal get deficit," added Tan, referring to the strong possibility that government overspending may exceed the limit of P300 billion set for 2009.

In yesterday's auction, the Bureau of the Treasury raised a total of P4.91 billion or about just three-quarters of the planned 96.5 billion.

Buyers tendered a total of P4.045 billion against the BTr's offer of P3.5 billion for the 91-day T-bill.

They also tendered a total of P6.01 billion, or more than double the P3 billion offer for the 182-day bill.

Further, lenders pitched a total of P3.98 billion to buy P3.5 billion worth of 364-day bills.

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EXPERIENCE WEBREADY

Managing Enterprising Families
ACE
December 3 and 4, 2009
The Managing Enterprising Families is a two-day program designed for family enterprises who are concerned about sustainability and ensuring smooth governance of the enterprise over the long-term. The course is targeted for founders of family enterprises and their spouses, siblings, and children.
ACE Center for Entrrepreneurship & Management Education, Inc. (ACE-MC, Inc.)

Business Expansion: Get help with BDO Business Mortgage Loan
They say to be an entrepreneur, you have to be business savvy, passionate of your product, and driven to succeed despite challenges. With today's economic climate and cut-throat competition, however, a positive attitude and cost-effective business discipline may only get you so far. Today's fledgling businesses have it tough, not just in surviving but in cashing in profit as well.
Business loans are offered by most banks nowadays, however, the new BDO Business Mortgage Loan offers surprisingly hassle-free and convenient application with flexible and affordable loan packages. "We want to provide growing SMEs with a financing product that addresses their needs for expansion," says Gil C. Pamatmat, BDO Senior Vice President and Business Mortgage Loans Head. "And since applications can be done through any of our 700 BDO branches nationwide, making that first step is easy." The application process is effortless with select mall branches offering extended banking hours and weekend operations.
Get a minimum loan amount of P1,000,000 to a maximum of P10,000,000 which can help you cover any major business requirements such as additional working capital and purchase of property and equipment. You can also customize your loan package with flexible terms and fixed interest rates from as short as 12 months up to 10 years, depending on your business needs and payment capacity. Loan advisors will gladly sit down with you and help you with your loan package. Sole Proprietors, Partnerships, and Corporations whose business has been operating for at least 2 years are qualified to apply.
If you're a bank depositor, you can pay for your monthly amortization conveniently with your BDO account through Auto-Debit. No need to line up at the bank, no need to run after a due date. To apply for a BDO Business Mortgage Loan, head to your nearest BDO branch. For complete information, log on to www.bdo.com.ph.

BUSINESS

Economy said to have grown faster in third quarter

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) said the economy likely grew even faster in the third quarter, citing macroeconomic indicators that extended those seen in the first two quarters of the year.

In the first quarter, the economy posted a growth of 0.6 percent, the lowest in about three decades. The anemic growth performance prompted fears that the Philippine economy would sink in a recession alongside its neighbors.

Recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of decline in output of an economy usually measured in terms of gross domestic product. GDP is the sum of values of goods and services produced and rendered within an economy in a given period.

In the second quarter, however, the economy grew by 1.5 percent. The economy's performance assured officials that the Philippines would not fall into a recession.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters that the economy performed even better in the third quarter.

The public may then expect a GDP growth of more than 1.5 percent, pointing to first speculations that the domestic economy would continue this year, he said.

Drivers of growth in the third quarter include the continuing rise of remittances from overseas Filipino workers and an increase of foreign direct investments and foreign portfolio investments, Tetangco said.

Data from the BSP showed that foreign direct investments posted a net inflow of $1.2 billion in January to July, up 10.6 percent from that of the same period last year.

Foreign portfolio investments registered a net inflow of $228 million in the first nine months of the year, a turnaround from a net outflow of $389 million seen last year.

New IP rules to shield investors

By Abigail L. Ho

DOCTORS WHO ARE THINKING twice about investing in the country for fear of having their intellectual property (IP) infringed may soon breathe a sigh of relief now that the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines has come out with a special set of rules governing IP rights violations.

In yesterday's Colloquium for Commercial Court Judges on Intellectual Property Rights, IP Philippines Director General Adrian Cristobal Jr. presented to Chief Justice Reynato Puno the proposed Special Rules on IPR litigation.

The rules would expedite the resolution of IPR cases, which usually took at least six years to resolve, Cristobal said.

Under the proposed special rules, selected commercial courts in the National Capital Region would be designated Special IP courts with national jurisdiction.

Puno said he would "have these rules presented to the Supreme Court the soonest possible time, after proper review."

St. Peter DeathCare Week 2009

October 27 to November 2, 2009

GINTONG Alaala

Join the Gintong Alaala Nationwide Holy Mass on November 1, 2009 @ 8:00 A.M.
in observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.

For details and prayer requests, call 1-800-10-7873837 (STPETER) or (02) 371-7757 or visit www.stpeter.com.ph.

Kahit Saan, Kahit Kailan, St. Peter Maaasahan!

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LIFESTYLE Wellness

New phone for active outdoor lifestyle

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS CO. Ltd., one of the world's leading mobile phone manufacturers, introduced to the Philippines the newest addition to its roster of innovative and stylish phones: Samsung Xplorer B2100 Xtreme Edition.

Equipped with outstanding outdoor features, the Samsung Xplorer offers not only robust durability and comfortable grip, but unique features designed to fit an active outdoor lifestyle.

"The Samsung Xplorer is the perfect companion for extreme sports who enjoy active outdoor activities or those who just want an everyday durable phone that can give them not only the basics of calling and texting but a few extra features as well," said Dandee Chui, vice president of Samsung Mobile.

"With the launch of this phone, Samsung will be able to solidify its position in the outdoor phone market and continue to develop products that excel in durability and usability."

The Samsung Xplorer is encased in anti-shock urethane material commonly used in sporting goods such as skateboards. This gives the phone the ability to withstand bumps, bangs, scrapes, scuffs, and even dust and water.

The phone is also IP67-certified; it can withstand shock, dust and water of up to one meter of depth for 30 minutes of submersion. Adaptable to the toughest conditions, the Samsung Xplorer is impenetrable to blowing rain, salt fog and extremely low and high temperatures—a virtually indestructible mobile phone that is compliant with military stan-

BOOM Gonzales

JUSTIN Cruz

JHANO Kalaw

It can withstand shock, dust and water

dard 810F.

Aside from its sturdy and resilient shell, the Samsung Xplorer is also equipped with mobile phone features perfect for the outdoors, such as loud external speakers and noise cancellation. These eliminate the use of fussy headsets that only hinder movements when engaging in outdoor activities.

Voice calls from the Samsung Xplorer end will be loud and clear no matter how noisy the background is. Another cool feature is the torch light—brighter than the regular flashlight—which can come in handy whenever and wherever additional light is needed.

Also a fully functioning business phone, the Samsung Xplorer has complete organizing features that include a calendar, to do list, alarm, currency converter and calculator. Its GPRS capabilities connect users to the Internet for browsing and e-mail. Other features include a 1.3-megapixel camera, FM Radio, sound recording and expandable memory of up to 8GB.

Samsung also presents the newest users of Samsung Xplorer: Boom Gonzales, sportscaster, DJ and action cameraman; Justin Cruz, TV host and sports editor of Uno and Chalk magazines, who engages in water-based sports such as wakeboarding and surfing; Jhanno Kalaw, trainer and top blogger; Blue Eagle Justin Chua; and Ateneo Pentaraider, TV host.

Occult shop teaches people how to cast spells, make potions

White magic stuff should make people's faith stronger

By Margs C. Enriquez
Contributor

IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY, AN OCCULT shop makes for recession-proof business. The goods: white magic accessories. The service: teaching people how to cast spells and make their own potions to fulfill their desires.

Jeanne Flavia, founder of Sanctuario Spa, didn't win the Presidential Award as Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for nothing. Adherent to Sanctuario Spa, Sinatoza, Incense and Magical Charms is the arbiter of sacramic implements for white magic.

Flavia has been at the forefront of upgrading the spa industry in the Philippines. He is also a Reiki Master who eventually became a channel for angels. Reiki, or healing the physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of a person through energy, is already accepted as one of the 21st century alternative healing modalities. He combines diagnosis, healing and counseling by claiming he "works with angels," among them Uriel, the archangel of prophesy. Flavia was surprised that there was a demand for ritual accessories—crystals, candles, magical herbs, cast iron pots, talismans and amulets for power and protection, crystal balls and witchcraft literature. He discovered that there are Wiccans, practitioners of modern witchcraft in the country.

Practitioners are crafted by their belief in

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPAY — BY JOS. ABERIA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH. JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOWKNOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGCO

JAMES BOND

ENTIRE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PABUSTAN

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

TALKBOX — BY MARK COLL

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

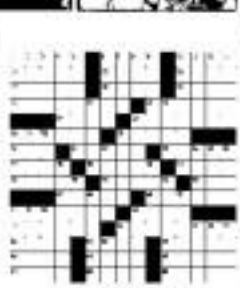
ATOMIC AND WEEDY — BY VINA GARCIA LLANO

KIKO MACHINE — BY MANO ABERIA

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Intermediate Puzzle (Letters)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dan Gerlach

2			6		9			4
		5	7		4	6		
	4						9	
7			3		1			8
8								5
4			9		5			6
	8						2	
		1	8		3	5		
3			5		6			9

Difficulty Level: ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and progress at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	5	2	6	7	3	9	8	1
8	9	3	1	4	5	7	6	2
1	6	7	8	9	2	5	3	4
9	1	5	2	3	7	8	4	6
7	8	4	9	6	1	2	5	3
3	2	6	4	5	8	1	9	7
5	3	8	7	1	4	6	2	9
2	7	9	5	8	6	4	1	5
6	4	1	3	2	9	3	7	8

Occult shop teaches people how to cast spells, make potions

From page C1

the dual divinity of the god and goddess. They also worship the natural world, which they see as pervaded with powerful force that may be harnessed through rituals. Practitioners invoke these deities during sepatu festivals, solstices and in the full moon. The most manager, Bella Dorina, is a Wiccan and high priestess.

Genuine crystals

As to typical customers, the Wiccans and people interested in the occult had difficulty sourcing genuine and affordable crystals and the right candles for rituals. Flores points out that although the market is inundated with crystals, majority are fake. "When you hold the crystal, it will choose you. It will vibrate. You should feel the energy. It need not just be sold, but the longest you hold it, it will be yours. Through a magnifying glass, you will see imperfections such as cloud formations and inserticons. Fake ones have an unopaque, too reading and they are too perfect. They all look the same," explains Flores.

Wiccans use smaller candles in different colors, not the usual ones found in stores. The most's black-and-white candles are used in a burning ritual. People write their intentions, offer it to the gods and goddesses and light candles. Some burn them. "It aids your thoughts process. The whole ritual magnifies your intentions," says Flores.

The shop offers over 100 varieties of herbs, sourced from the Philippines. Their local and India, such as sage for cleansing an

BIG deal of implements used for rituals during Sabbath when they cast spells

OIL barrels that double as dinner tables help negative ch

region, juniper berries for love potions, cardamom seeds for attracting prosperity and cleansing negative feelings.

Basic ingredients such as basil are used as additives for homemade incenses. "It's more effective if you consume your own incense," says Flores. Customers are taught to prepare the herbs in a fungo (pot). While the ingredients are being consumed, they recite incantations. We blame the process to fighting a specific in church and saying a sermon. "It's all in the power of thought, but nowena tend to be generic and sometimes mechanical," he says.

Serious, furious and Magical Charms also

aims to educate people on how to use the paraphernalia effectively. For instance, they learn what beads should be cleansed and consecrated to make them work. "Mr. make beads, not just for wooden but also for magical things, genuine first potatoes and tobacco herbs on crystals. They are infused with the energy from the amazon, which works like a reserve," says Flores.

Potent formula

One reason the store teaches how to make potions instead of selling ready-made formulas is that they are easily effective. Flores adds, "Nowadays, books need BOSO (Bureau of Food and Drug) approval. "The formula is more potent if it is infused with the vibrations of the maker."

The potions or love spells are applied on the pillow and homemade ulcers. "Ah, yeah people how to build an altar in a special place." So dark money should inspire people. Dorina says the store believes in the rule of three: Any negative thought or action performed will boomerang on the person three more.

The era of all these thriving and rituals stems from the power of thought and faith. "Be careful what you wish for." Flores chat. Be the intentions should always be pure, otherwise what they wish for could bring a negative. "For a wish to be granted, you need a fulfi (exchange). Ancient officers made an real sacrifices, burned and grayed over to find, people offer food to the deities. In Asian countries, people would throw salt outside

the store to ward off negative energies that blocked their businesses. In our culture, people make a present (coin). Make an offering in the line and throw barley. Call it the fulfi ("Do and you shall receive") or the karmic philosophy of taking service from the Universe and returning the favor.

But to enthusiastic Netizens, Potions and Magical Charms' trappings it is overlook in influence as a faith on psychic subject. People who have practiced the rituals have been affected profoundly, making them more determined to make something of their lives.

Located at 1629 J. Morales St. near Bonifacio Circle, Malate, Manila, tel. 4561127.

Does everyone have a soulmate—a reader asks

DESPITE THE FACT THAT I have been teaching Seminars, Retreats and Psychoanalysis for over 30 years in the Philippines and internationally in foreign countries, and have written a bestseller on it, I still receive a lot of questions about the subject. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions and my answers:

1. What is a soulmate?

There are various definitions of soulmates. The one I like best, which I use in my seminars, is the definition given by ancient psychic and prophet Edgar Cayce (1918-1945): At for us I listen, he was the first modern person to talk about it in the 1930s while in a trance.

According to Cayce, soulmates are two souls who, after a series of lifetimes encountering each other, become so close to each other that their destinies become intertwined and each becomes a helpmate to the other in their soul evolution. The purpose of soulmates is to support and assist each other to achieve a higher level of soul development. They share the blueprint or pattern of destiny and are very compatible in all aspects of their being.

2. Does everyone have a soulmate?

Everybody, yes, because one will need a partner or helpmate in his or her journey back to the

INNER AWARENESS

Jerome T. Licarion

Cayce. Although in a given lifetime, a person may choose to live alone, in most Cayce lifetimes he or she will meet his or her perfect mate. Remember that one does not become a soulmate to another in a single lifetime, it takes a series of lifetimes together to unite.

3. How did this concept of soulmate originate? Who started it?

Although the word "soulmate" is a modern terminology, the concept of having a perfect partner in life that completes us is an old one.

About 400 years before Christ, the Greek philosopher Plato, in his Dialogue called "The Symposium," wrote in the words of his revered teacher, Socrates, about the story of how mankind began. He said that at the beginning of time, male and female were in one body with two heads, two pairs of legs and hands. They became so ambitious and powerful that they wanted to be like gods. And so the gods of Olympus decided to cut them into two, thereby separating the male from the female to weaken them. Since then, one just-or has been seeking to unite with the other to perfect or complete himself or herself and become strong again.

In the 16th century the great playwright William Shakespeare wrote the immortal story of two star-crossed lovers, Romeo and Juliet, who defied their warring families by falling in love for love with each other that they willingly gave their lives for the other in a sense, one can say that Romeo and Juliet were soulmates.

4. Do soulmates have to be the same age?

No, chronological or physical age is not the important thing about a soulmate relationship but soul age.

Two persons may differ greatly in their physical age but they always must be the same soul age. This means they must have been on the earth plane at the same number of times, although in some of those lifetimes they may not be together and may not be related to each other by blood or kinship. Two met a couple where the woman was around 70 years old and the man in his 30s. But they believed they were soulmates and were incompatible.

5. Is the pressure we marry our soulmate?

Not necessarily. However, he or she is definitely your karmic partner.

A karmic partner is a person with whom you have a karmic link, which began in a past life or lives. It is a person who either has something to learn from you, or a person you have to learn from. Everyone we meet is our teacher. No matter how difficult or painful a relationship is to this lifetime, it is something we have chosen to meet our karmic obligations to each other.

There is no such thing as predestination except what you ourselves have chosen it to be. For our will is forever and absolutely free. This is probably the greatest gift or the greatest "mistake" God made, to give us complete freedom of choice.

In Tomorrow's edition: Is there only one soulmate for each of us?

So, there is only one soulmate or perfect partner for each of us, but we may have several karmic partners in a given lifetime.

(To be continued next Tuesday)

Mr/s: The total Realization, for me & the resurrection Seminar will be held Nov. 14, 3-7 p.m., at the 10th Floor Plaza I Corp., 1184 Dapujo St., Binondo, Manila. Call 0917-8787445, 8350898, e-mail jsmedicare@yahoo.com.

No dinner?
All you need is your mobile phone!

Loading hour from, aren't you always looking for ways to make things more convenient and less complicated? Thanks to today's technology, staying on top of things at work, maintaining close relationships with loved ones, doing chores and errands or simply enjoying life has become a little less of a challenge.

Of course, the intricacies remain, but we no longer sweat it out like before. Take the case of newly married Inane Manahan Sopungco. "Jim married and I are discovering it's easier to manage a business than run a household. My mom made it look easy," she shares. "One night I got home really tired and realized I forgot all about dinner. I was all set to order take out when I remembered I ran out of cash and forgot to pass by the bank. My husband was also home any minute, no doubt hungry and wanting his dinner," relates Inane.

Luckily for Inane, all it took was sending an SMS message to save the day. "I got out of that fight spot with my Citi card. I ordered food via the hotline, told them I would pay with Citi Mobile, sent a text to charge it to my Citi card, and dinner was served."

To find out more about Citi Mobile, visit www.citibank.com.ph.

Protein-rich legumes help fight inflammation

THERE ARE FOODS THAT CAN KEEP YOU healthy and young looking.

1. Eat anti-viral/anti-bacterial foods.

● Virgin coconut oil—Once considered a bad, it is now a must for those who value their health.

It is the only oil in the world that has these properties plus lauric acid (monolaurin), a substance found only in mother's milk. The immediate effect of VCO, once ingested, is pain siesge within 20 minutes. If applied on skin, deep hydration in 5 minutes. Take 2-4 tbsp of VCO daily before, during or after meals.

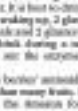
● Seaweed—Dating back to ancient Chinese medicine and Japanese and Scandinavian traditions, seaweed is a food staple that promises longevity. For example, in Okinawa, Japan, there are 600 centenarians out of a population of over 1.3 million. Their diet? Fresh produce and seaweed.

2. Eat Fish. Oysters, salmon, mackerel and shellfish are also called youth food. High in zinc and copper which are good for the skin and hair, a daily dose of fish is rich in omega-3 than you see a the shots. Fish contain EPA (essential fatty acids that keep skin cells cell membranes young by holding water better.

Dark leafy green vegetables, olive oil, flaxseed oil and walnuts also do the trick.

3. Legume power. Don't be afraid of lentils, beans and chickpeas. They contain flavonoids subside fight inflammation. Also an excellent source of protein. And if you want muscle mass, eat them. Unlike animal protein, these natural plant-based food sources do not alter the PH balance or acid-ratio from base to acidic. These foods keep metabolism up. Therefore, they contribute to weight loss.

4. Water healthy. It will not cause you



INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

to bloat, contrary to popular misconceptions. Water is a cure, healing elixir, cleanser and detoxifier. It is best to drink 2 glasses of water upon waking up, 2 glasses 10 minutes before meals and 2 glasses before retiring. Don't deprive yourself because it will suck out the enzyme in your food.

5. Berry good. The berries' antioxidant properties are higher than many fruits. But its AOM berry from the Amazon forest whose extracts and concentrates raise the immune system with an ORAC value (Oxygen Radical Absorption Capacity) of 13,000-32,000 for 1-tbsp.

This is more than all your multivitamins/minerals put together in a week. Its minerals are their efficacy in chronic diseases notorious to diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, fatigue syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome are posing it. For more info, call 7238878, 3223843.

Affirm today: "I harness the power of endless nature today."

Essentials

There are essentials to ensure health and beauty can be none more powerful than the food you eat. You can spend a fortune on expensive branded-cosmetic lines but possibly there is not in a bottle but in the natural and powerful goodness of Mother Earth.

Youth scrub

Cause fresh coconut (the more mature, the better). Grab a handful and rub gently evenly on face and body. Be natural, gaining yet semi-crop texture is an excellent body scrub and skin moisturizer. It also is well-rich, in VCO body butter and scrub. Call 7238878, 3223843.

Love and light!

Korina and Mar: it's their day

SEN. MAR Roxas and Korina Sanchez at donation rites

TODAY'S THE BIG DAY FOR SEN. MAR Roxas and broadcast journalist Korina Sanchez. At 3 p.m., they're tying the knot at Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City, followed by a scaled-down meet-and-greet reception at the grounds of the Dominican church.

The reception, originally envisioned as a grand affair at Araneta Coliseum with a guest list of thousands, was radically pared down as a concession by the couple to the immediate victims of the devastation wrought on the country by back-to-back typhoons. Instead, the couple has donated part of their reception budget to relief organizations for continued relief assistance to people affected by Tropical Storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng"—P500,000 each given to Caritas Phils., ABS-CBN Foundation, UNDP Bayanihan Foundation and Philippine Navy Foundation; P250,000 each to Gawad Kalinga Foundation and ABS-CBN Foundation/Kapamilya Huwaran Sto.Pinatubo.

Sanchez will wear a Filipiniana wedding gown designed by Regita Albert, while Roxas will be in a barong Tagalog by Sandy Ortiz.

The wedding sponsors are Boss Royal, Helen Gonzales, Baby Roxas, Griffin Lazaro, Maria Vera, Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Archbishop Emeritus Luigi Gl. Jorge Antonio and Sen. Benigno Aquino.

For the Inquirer.net editors over the weekend, Sanchez wore a Cary Santiago gown accented with lace (see sketch).

THE ENGAGED couple greets Red Cross' Rene Hotal after handing over donation. Above, sketch of the Cary Santiago lace-accented gown Korina wore to her stepmother's office over the weekend.

The gift of calm, restoration, romance

FINDING THE IDEAL CORPORate gift (need not be stressful if you ask Dr. Mike Tuvell, president of Spa Essentials, makers of the Aura'in Wellness product line. "There are numerous options out there in the market but no one would argue that the best gift would be the gift of wellness and health," he said.

Aura'in delivers accordingly, the science of healing using natural plant extracts, in various forms such as soaps, lotions, balms, sprays, essences and oils at reasonable costs.

Infusing the healing powers, both aromatic and chemical properties, of essential plant oils, in premium products, Aura'in offers different variants for different needs.

Ahaja (yoga) is a collection of stress-relief balm, muscle warming oil with Peppermint and Peppermint, calming insect repellent made with Lemongrass, Citronella and Peppermint; and a Facial oil 'mask' wash with tea tree extract, moisturizing hand lotion with shea butter and tea tree hand sanitizer.

Pahay (relax) has Lavender and Ylang-Ylang, a perfect blend that relaxes mind, heart and body. This blend is incorporated in shower gel, body lotion, dry body oil, essential oil blend, massage oil, all-natural room spray, linen spray, body mist and hand lotion.

Gayuma (sensuous) has the aphrodisiac properties of Sweet Orange, Cedarwood, Rosewood, Palmarosa and Ylang-Ylang. It has essential oil blend, massage oil and all-natural room spray.

Sigla (energy) has Peppermint, fennel, May Chang, and Lemongrass that are combined in body lotion, massage oil, shower gel, essential oil blend, all-natural room spray and body mist.

"Reinventing the enormous benefits of all those soothing and healing aromatic plants available with our special gift packs. One can give the gift of calm, restoration, energy, focus and romance through our high quality range of tranquilizing ensembles," he explained to explain most of his or her students or dreams.

It was in the spirit of this knowledge that I headed to the presence of Shri Shri Ravi Shankar, founder of the Art of Living, when he entered Manila where years ago. When I saw his photo on a flyer on the Internet, I could have judged him as just another Indian guru. But upon glancing at his face, I saw a compassionate face, peaceful eyes, and white robe; I was inspired to join the "Health and Happiness" workshop he would conduct for three evenings.

Heeding the call of my soul, I marvelled my appointments and traveled to the course.

The main thing that struck me upon entering the venue was the peaceful atmosphere of the ballroom where there's close to 500 people were enthusiastically and quietly seated on the floor which was covered with white sheets.

Gompf, as his devotees fondly call him, exuded light hearts, wisdom and humor. The knowledge points that he imparted made a lot of sense and if applied, would make one's life simple and happy. The activities were fun; the breathworks blissful. I felt very good at the end of each session.

My three evenings extended to two more days of following Gompf in other events he attended. Laugh and be healthy income generating livelihood compared to charcoal and iron production. The admirable thing about this project is, aside from helping the community stand on its own, a portion of the profits goes to Aura'in's fresh gone back to the foundation to keep the vision alive.

Aura'in is produced by the company behind popular Spa Essentials products (available at Watsons). Products like SPA bags to Tagaytay and Pampanga and Spa Professionals International Development Center, an internationally accredited professional spa school in the country. It is found at Echo Shore at Boracay, Balinea in Old Shell of Asia, Sanctuario Spa in Malate, The Spa at Shangri-La Boracay, Mactan Island Resort and Spa in Lapu-Lapu City, Tinig Lakeshore at Subic, Sanctuario Spa in Malate, The Spa at Shangri-La Boracay, Mactan Island Resort and Spa in Lapu-Lapu City, Tinig Lakeshore at Subic, Sanctuario Spa in Malate, The Spa at Shangri-La Boracay, Mactan Island Resort and Spa in Lapu-Lapu City, Tinig Lakeshore at Subic.

ESSENTIAL oils by Aura'in

How I've imbibed the energy of my Indian guru

By Rina Pamaranik/Regh
Lifestyle Editor

"WHEN A SPIRITUAL MASter is in town, drop what you are doing and go to him/her the energy of the purest presence".

This was the advocacy of my former yoga teachers. A "guru", just like in our Filipino dialect, means "teacher". But in the parlance of yoga, a guru who is also a sage, is one who is enlightened and able to guide the enlightenment of his or her students or devotees.

It was in the spirit of this knowledge that I headed to the presence of Shri Shri Ravi Shankar, founder of the Art of Living, when he entered Manila where years ago. When I saw his photo on a flyer on the Internet, I could have judged him as just another Indian guru. But upon glancing at his face, I saw a compassionate face, peaceful eyes, and white robe; I was inspired to join the "Health and Happiness" workshop he would conduct for three evenings.

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Visit www.auraiwellness.com and the Aura'in Page in Facebook for more details. You can also get orders from www.auraiwellness.multiply.com.

Nutrition center gives counseling, meal plans, product info

ABBOTT NUTRITION INTERNATIONAL (ANI) Ltd. 995-1555 or toll free 1-800-10-995-1555) recently launched the Abbott Nutrition Solutions Center, which aims to provide a better and more caring relationship with their customers through an array of value-added services that supports healthier living.

ABBOTT Nutrition International's Marivar Reynaldo (right) with Dra. Ribon to formally inaugurate the Abbott Nutrition Solutions Center with Jaime Bautista and Mark Sumaoang.

The opening of Abbott Nutrition Solutions Center was attended by Ani marketing director Marivar Reynaldo. "This is another way of showing to our customers that we care and we are committed to serve in pursuing healthy lives," she says.

From Monday to Saturday 8 a.m.–8 p.m., licensed nutritionist-dietitians are available over the phone to provide free nutrition counseling and sample meal plans, share product information, and answer any of the customers' inquiries related to good nutrition and health. Customers may also receive free nutrition tips through SMS and e-mail upon contacting Abbott Nutrition Solutions Center.

Abbott Nutrition has purchased database software to equip the Nutrition Advisors with an advanced tool that would help in monitoring each patient's customers to meet their needs and effectively provide excellent customer service. Ani Group product manager Mish Bautista explained, "We are the second Abbott affiliate in Southeast Asia after Singapore to use proprietary software in effectively relaying to our target consumers."

Consumers can also log on to Abbott Family Site website (www.abbottfamilysites.com.ph) for more nutrition tips and product information. Without incurring consumer costs, activities and meal plans for proper nutrition and health education available on this site are helpful and informative for the general consumer.

How too much TV contributes to poor health

By Mirel Felipe-Maldeza
Contributor

TOO MUCH TV IS ASSOCIATED with poor health, in particular, lack of weight loss and an increased risk of excess weight/obesity. A recent study, which appears in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, examined the relationship between television viewing and weight in young adults aged 26-36. In this study, individuals were assessed for waist size, TV viewing time, amount of food and drink consumed during TV viewing, and physical activity levels during leisure time.

Researchers found that watching more television was associated with greater waist circumference. Women who watched three or more hours of TV a day had an 80 percent increased risk of excess abdominal obesity compared to those watching one hour of TV a day or less. Men watching three or more hours of TV a day were more than twice as likely to have moderate abdominal obesity compared to those watching one hour of TV a day or less.

What we can gather from these is that TV viewing time is a marker for the weight and the overall well-being of a person. We are only speculative on it so why.

Here are some possible reasons why the link might exist:

- Perhaps it is possible that people who choose to watch less television have a tendency to exercise, due to education, motivation or other factors.
- People who watch a lot of TV may have the tendency for snoozing and unconscious, mindless eating.
- People who watch a lot of TV may be more likely to use a lot of junk foods such as potato chips, fries and sweets. The TV turns the mind off, which turns off the mind-body connection and the internal desire to eat healthy food.
- A person who watches a lot of television is more likely to be influenced by advertisements, which generally never encourage truly nutritious food.

Rules on TV watching

- Watch a show after you've done all your tasks for the day including exercising for an hour. Or watch TV while exercising on a cardio machine, bicycle or elliptical machine.
- Studies show that less than eight hours of sleep is related to weight gain and increase in mortality and morbidity. It was recently found out at the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies that watching television at night may contribute to chronic sleep debt.
- Do not eat while watching. That's why you should limit TV watching to less than an hour. Only Seeing food commercials might trigger craving for junk foods. Hunger, then eat chocolate bars. If you are used to eating at least a small bag of potato chips which is about 180 to 200 additional calories everyday that's 1,260 to 1,400 extra calories per week and 5,040 to 5,600 calories per month, equivalent to 1.5 pounds of weight gain every month. But if you exercise an hour each day instead of watching idiots eating chips, you can lose at least 1.5 pounds/month.
- Don't use TV watching as an excuse not to move around. Here are watching will stress you more since loads of work will overflow the next day or weight loss goals will be submerged. Find other stress-releasing activities like walking, dancing or lifting light weights.
- Schedule TV or movie watching time to the hours a week.

There is a minimum of reasons why people who watch TV/movies put on the pounds. Perhaps some of the reasons mentioned above will lead you to find other activities that will not only prevent disease and those on our wastes, but will also be in our life in general.

E-mail the author at rmfelipe@gmail.com

Editor Bennie G. Velarde

ENTERTAINMENT

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'Starstruck' holds int'l auditions

ASPIRING STARS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, 16 TO 25 YEARS old, of Filipino lineage and with talent in singing, dancing and acting are invited to the auditions for "Starstruck's" GMA-Net. world's latest search. Venues have been scheduled in Tokyo (Nov. 7 and 8), Bahrain (Nov. 5 and 6), Dubai (Nov. 5), Abu Dhabi (Nov. 6), San Angeles (Nov. 5 and 6), New Jersey (Nov. 7 and 8), and New York (Nov. 9 and 10). Applicants are requested to e-mail their name, age and contact number to starstruck@gmanetwork.com.

Christian Bautista leads

THE TOP-SELLING MUSIC IN THE Philippines for the week Oct. 12-18, based on Odyssey Music & Video store chain's nationwide sales reports:

OPM

1) "Runaway Revisited: The Love Songs of Jose Mari Chan (Exclusive Mega Cut+ Edition)," Christian Bautista, Universal Records; 2) "Rockdrone Of The Soul," Hero, Warner Music; 3) "M 3," Martin Nievera & Gary Valenciano, Universal Records; 4) "Pandora, Harananag Salamat Pero, Cory C. Aquino," Various Artists, Star Records; 5) "Bawa Na Nga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 6) "Gising Gising," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 7) "White Lace & Promises," Agot Isidro, Polyfam Records; 8) "Hope," Dops Fernandez, MGA Movie; 9) "Mahirap Ito Aminin," Princess, Viva Music; 10) "Songs Rediscovered 2," Jed Madela, Universal Records

CHRISTIAN Bautista

Overall

1) "Runaway Revisited: The Love Songs of Jose Mari Chan (Exclusive Mega Cut+ Edition)," Christian Bautista, Universal Records; 2) "Sandaluna Of The Soul," Hero, Warner Music; 3) "M 3," Martin Nievera & Gary Valenciano, Universal Records; 4) "Pandora, Harananag Salamat Pero, Cory C. Aquino," Various Artists, Star Records; 5) "Bawa Na Nga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 6) "Gerde," Gerde Generation, Universal Records; 7) "Bread," Sam Ryan, Warner Music; 8) "Deadma," Taylor Swift, MGA Movie; 9) "Gising Gising," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 10) "Sorry, Sorry," Super Junior, Universal Records

MIKA

JAY SEAN

US Top 10 singles

The best-selling recorded music in the United States, including digital downloads, as they appear in next week's issue of Billboard magazine:

1) "Down," Jay Sean feat. Lil Wayne, Universal Republic; 2) "Whatcha Say," Jason DeRulo, Warner Bros; 3) "Party In The U.S.A.," Miley Cyrus, Hollywood; 4) "Run This Town," Jay-Z, Rihanna & Kanye West, Def Nation; 5) "3," Britney Spears, Jive; 6) "Poker Face," Lady Gaga, Interscope; 7) "Fireflies," Owl City, Universal Republic; 8) "I Gotta Feeling," The Black Eyed Peas, Interscope; 9) "Blow Me (Ha Bang)," The Black Eyed Peas, Interscope; 10) "You Belong With Me," Taylor Swift, Big Machine AP

odyssey MUSIC & VIDEO

ASIAN Cobra rocking: Rusty Palomino (center), Bubbles Asuncion (L) and Dennis Palomino

Lusty cheers for one rare gig

By Tony H. Maglaya
Contributor

ALMOST 40 YEARS AGO TODAY, Pinoy rock was young and popular, but with its rebellious stance and hopes dashed by martial law, overshadowed by disco, and chastened by a certain cough syrup. A return to traditional values was the operating social code and if the happy-go-lucky sound of the Filipino-based band Maria Cobra unintentionally fit the mood of the times, its radio-friendly music offered a genial counterfoil to the restless blues of the socially disenchanted Pinoy Band.

That laughable vibe radiated throughout Maria Cobra's rare gig at RJ Bar recently. It was the 70s bands first live performance 20 years after lead guitarist-vocalist Rusty Palomino threw in the towel to frustration over a once flourishing career that was going nowhere.

The jam packed crowd exploded into lusty cheers as Rusty launched into the opening chords to "Hanggang Mga Buhlingan." Sure for the epiglottus and short hair, Rusty still has the same build and the slight strap that went his trademark posture all those years ago. Old reliable Billie Swalla has returned on drums, his brother's deserted brother, Jun, has been replaced on bass by the latter's own son.

Simple rock tunes

Less pervasive Mellow, Rusty was a simple man who played and sang simple rock tunes. At the RJ Bar gig, he prefaced each song with, "Sabadoom!" or "Boomsipa na kaya."

He didn't have to bother with apologies because his core audience understood. As the show progressed, Rusty's lustful singe passion contrasted with the fire and rite with which the reformed band tackled the Maria Cobra songbook.

On the fifth song, Rusty told the crowd that he played just four—only five songs in your concerts. This time, probably buoyed by the eleven reception, he proceeded to unleash a generation repertoire that spanned Maria Cobra's debut album and its unreleased second LP. The band adeptly strung together hits like "Dahonghong," "Bakdapo," and "Isla ni Irenga," among others, into a seamless, rocking jam.

Rusty introduced "Sintang Hanggang" as an incomplete guitar concerto, which turned out to be a monster progressive rocker in today's rock lingo, the band traipsed among the best moments of once new metal and hard core to reach the ecstatic release of an explosive ending.

'Exodus'

Follow-up song was the surging "Exodus." By then, the rusty band of six hour ago had reached a glorious momentum of total fury and orchestral dexterity. The only hiccup was that Rusty's guitar did not light up to Romeo a la Hendrix due to a malfunctioning lights.

Red Stewart was sang, "The first one is the deepest." The Maria Cobra gig must have stoked a much deeper memory in those who kept the faith through the last 20 years.

A salute to top RP rockers

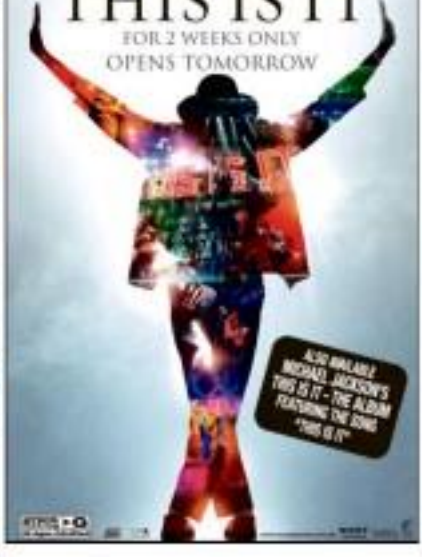
"A SALUTE TO THE Philippines' finest," the 107 Rock Awards '09 is set Oct. 30 in the World Trade Center, Bonifacio Ave., Makati City.

The event features live performances from Chicosci, The Dawn, Frames, Greyhounds, Inhyeons, Juan Dela Cruz Kamikazee, Kjwas, Pupil, Rico Blanco, Sandwich, Sugatbee, Up Dharma Down and Urbandub.

Dennis Trillo, Gabi and Tin Lorenzo perform in the presentation.

To be predicted are Best New Artist, Vocalist of the Year, Guitarist of the Year, Bassist of the Year, Drummer of the Year, Best Live Act, to The New Artist, Song of the Year, Album of the Year, Artist of the Year, Rock Video of the Year, Best Album Packaging, Producer of the Year, Listeners' Choice and a Hall of Fame awardee.

Show time is 8 p.m. Tickets cost ₱900 in SL Tickets at SM outlets, Big Dawn box offices, or call 911-5555.



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2 RED CLIFF
3 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
4 THE HURT LOCKER
5 HALLOWEEN 2
6 G-FORCE (Digital 3D)
7 BOYLETS
8 ANG LARO NG BUHAY NI JUAN
9 THE ECHO / SURROGATES
10 CARRIERS

ERMITA

1 CARRIERS
2 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
3 THE HURT LOCKER
4 HALLOWEEN 2
5 THE ECHO
6 RED CLIFF
7 ANG LARO NG BUHAY NI JUAN

METRO EAST

1 HALLOWEEN 2
2 THE HURT LOCKER
3 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
4 CARRIERS
5 RED CLIFF
6 THE UGLY TRUTH / NOT FORGOTTEN
7 THE ECHO
8 IN MY LIFE

NOVALICHES **PIONEER**

1 HALLOWEEN 2
2 KRUSH
3 THE ECHO
4 RED CLIFF
1 THE HURT LOCKER
2 HALLOWEEN 2
3 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
4 CARRIERS

Michael Jackson's THIS IS IT with stiffer features and music heroes worldwide is a rare behind-the-scenes look at the development, creation and rehearsal for his sold-out concerts that wouldn't have taken place beginning this summer in London's O2 Arena.

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1 BOOK OF BLOOD
2 IN MY LIFE
3 THE ECHO
4 RED CLIFF
1 RED CLIFF
2 IN MY LIFE
3 BOOK OF BLOOD
4 THE ECHO

STARMILLS

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2 THE GAMER
3 THE ECHO
4 ECHELON CONSPIRACY
5 BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT
6 THE FINAL DESTINATION

ANGELES **TAGUIGAN**

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3 THE ECHO
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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2009, 11AM

MOVIEWORLD

The one that got away?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

ISABEL OLI WAS TONGUE-TIED FOR A while when she learned that her ex, Paolo Guerin, had gotten his girlfriend, Lizzie Poe, pregnant. After recovering from the initial shock, she blurted out, "I'm happy for them. Walang hadlang basbasan kayo."

Doesn't she seriously wish it was her? "I'm on over Pao," she quipped. "Time to(o) some others see, can work for friends again, she haven't talked since our breakup. I saw him from afar at a party. He was onstage; I don't think he knew I was around. Ayoko naman ako istorbo. Hanggang ako lang sa kanya."

So sure, pero sa'n ba 'Yun many heartbreaks away are there from love to friendship?

***

My best pal Ismail, Cesar Montano, is mounting his first solo painting exhibit at Ayala Museum on Nov. 14. Check out his awesome masterpieces and buy one for your art collection. Most of the proceeds will go to Pamalhon Children Foundation's scholarship program. Among Buboy's pieces, my favorite is his painting of two lg. wrote that's displayed in his Italian suite, Pulitzers. Passion is in everything Buboy does, no cuts and off.

***

I had a blast at the launch of my online show on IGAT mySDO Weekend, "Shy Princesses," with beloved colleagues whom I call Indy 10—Ricky Lo, Shirley Pizarro and Isah Red. Hog on to www.pilitwatch.com and get your free membership and password). The launch was held at Jill's and Establishment in the Fort. Since the four of us were for different broadcasters, our swapping of juicy chismis has made us—I'm quite a gabfest. May the "9" be with you!

***

I unanimously enjoyed hanging out with Bhutz Sotto during that launch. We were with FLIX's super cool hosts, Gary Dejadi. I only I could write all the juicy stuff we talked about! Manz's revelations about some of our colleagues jolted me. I thought that I was already jaded, having grown up in the biz.

Let me share with you the bits and pieces of that conversation which were cut off the record. Manz told me that his brother Vic Sotto and Vic's girlfriend Pia Guiabo are considering tie the knot. He also said he has remained friends with his ex, Ali Sotto, who's now based abroad with her diplomat husband. They keep in touch via facebook.

I teased him, "Is your younger years, who had the most women—Vic, Vic, Vic or you?" He chuckled. "Believe it or not, ang tipo Sotto, Ando Salvador, Lapitan lang kami! Pag nagsabi ng masakit—ang girl, game na!" Who can resist the Sotto charm? You, Vic, Ted and Manz don't seem to grow older; only handsomer.

***

Speaking of the Sottos, my son JC and I had our set-to-last encounter in the Bida guy's "Fancy Flames." Since it was my first time to play the game, I was very nervous. Vic even teased me, "Do you wanna go to the bathroom before we start?"

Joey de Leon had watched me grow up, so seeing him on the show brought back a lot of happy memories. My mom was Tito Joey's first boss on AM radio. I'll never forget something he once said: That my mom is one of the people who taught him discipline.

After the game, I got to chat with Tito Joey. It was such a delight to see him. He's always been so fatherly to me. Even if JC and I didn't win the game, the joy of seeing the iconic trio (Joey de Leon, Vic Sotto and Tito Sotto) in their primetime glory was priceless.

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***

After receiving international recognition for the horror movie "Shorts," Richard Gutierrez comes up with renowned director Yam Laranas to deliver another horror-filled movie, "Sa'yo Lang," which opens in local cinemas Oct. 28. Fresh from Hollywood, Oink Sue incorporated high-class concepts for his new horror masterpiece that he acquired while re-directing "The Echo," the American version of "Shorts."

If life's serious moment of 2009, Cristine Reyes just says the dreaded Patricia S. With her convincing performance, another Cristine is born. It's bound to be a "Hall is(of)fame!"

***

Studio 23 launches "Catch Up TV" beginning today (www.studio23.tv) with the season premieres of "Grey's Anatomy" and "Desperate Housewives." It's the first free online streaming service by a TV network that allows users to watch Studio 23's local and foreign programs via the Internet. No need to worry if you miss your favorite show on the Kabuhayan network...you can now view it online whenever and wherever. It's perfect for our tech-savvy Kabuhayan who are always on the go," says Butch Quinto, managing director. "They can just click on the episode they missed and watch it free of charge.

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Jack o Lantern Photo Station: Treat yourself to a Halloween photo with our Pumpkin Jack o Lanterns
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Southern Cuisine Cooking Workshops: Comforting Casseroles
October 30; 4pm; Corte de las Palmas

AYALA CENTER CEBU

Pink Dinner for a Cause- Your P1,000 dinner at Terraces will fund cancer foundations
October 24; 6pm; The Terraces

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Young stars update their act and image

Nickelodeon's 'Shocktober'

KID FIX

NICKELODEON INVITES KIDS TO PUT ON their most "spooktacular" costumes for its "Shocktober" Halloween event on Oct. 31 in the Mega Hall of Old Mall of Asia from 3 to 9 p.m. Kids can score a ticket good for two persons with a minimum purchase of P1,000 from Toy Kingdom and Toy Express stores.

AS YOUNG STARS MOVE INTO THEIR 20s, they have no choice but to update their act and image, to keep their fans interested. These days some of the most significant moves are being made by:

Maja Salvador, whose big Dingaling break has finally come by way of "Magkaibigan sa Puso," which started telecasting this week. The new teleserye requires Maja to do some relatively "daring" scenes, so it's a big step up from the "easier" roles she's accepted in the past.

She'll have to stretch the dress to see for months how Maja has measured up to the demands of her biggest and most challenging role to date. In particular, we'll be evaluating her portrayal vis a vis that turned in by Erich Gonzales in "Estranghero." Both Maja and Erich are similar "young but sultry" actress types, so comparisons are called for.

Sarah Geronimo is similarly trying to reposition herself as a young-adult star, now that she's no longer a teenager. Sarah chilled on the big screen playing ding-dong opposite Richard Gutierrez in "Paano Na Kaya," but her now young-adult status requires her to update her act.

Her clothes sense has been uplifted up—not always successfully, I must be said. Last week, **we caught her on "GMA" looking really mature**, sexy even, with padded shoulders. What her stylist trying to make Sarah channel **Regine Velasquez**'s look when she interviewed up her singing career on TV in the early '80s? *Whatever the intention, the look didn't* look right for Sarah and should be further tweaked.

More importantly, Sarah's performance style should also be updated. The major issue of contention is the fact that, although she may "officially" have become a young adult, her sensibility is still of the teen and "inexperienced" sort—and the inexperience shows in her portrayals.

That's what happens when a young star is kept so busy that she's focusing almost exclusively on her career, and not enough on her private life. As a result, she hasn't had enough "maturing" experiences to lend credence and authenticity to her more adult characterizations.

How to make up for the slack? Sarah has to realize that actors get the depth required of their performances from living, not from acting lessons. You can pretend to feel only for so long, before viewers realize that you're just acting (unsuccessfully).

So, Sarah needs to take some time off from her hectic career to contemplate (more on expanding herself to the emotional challenges of life, as that, whereas difficult actors requires her to feel deeply, she can draw believable and truly-felt emotions from a sufficiently deep source.

Libra in Cebu

"Libera in Concert," staged Oct. 23 at the PICC, goes to the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu tomorrow. The acclaimed boys' choir's distinct sound emanates from the artistic blending of voices from the group's members, whose ages range from 7 to 15. Their angelic voices produce rich harmonies, from classical pieces by Beethoven to Gregorian chants, and even new age music by Enya and Brian Wilson. For the Cebu date, call the Arts Council at 233-6452.

NESTOR U. TORRE

"YOUNG but sultry" Erich Gonzales

SARAH Geronimo

MAJA Salvador

Meryl Streep as Julia Child: Tribute to mom

MERYL STREEP ON HER ROLE AS JULIA Child in "Julie & Julia": "What I was trying to do with Julia was do homage to my mother. My mother was a virtuoso of this era, she had the same zest de vivre. She was someone like they describe Julia Child as being, who walked into a room and just lit it up. She made friends easily and was gregarious, and she overstimulated her enthusiasms with great joy. Her bubbled in this film is the idea that as long as you have food and shelter, the necessities ... what makes you happy on top of that is very simple and it's accessible to anyone. It's a lovely message and it's certainly true." AFP

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